



PC Magazine At Home

PC Labs Torture-Tests Nine Leading Home PCs

NETWORK EDITION

Doing Business on
The Internet: We
Look at Unix and
NT Server Solutions

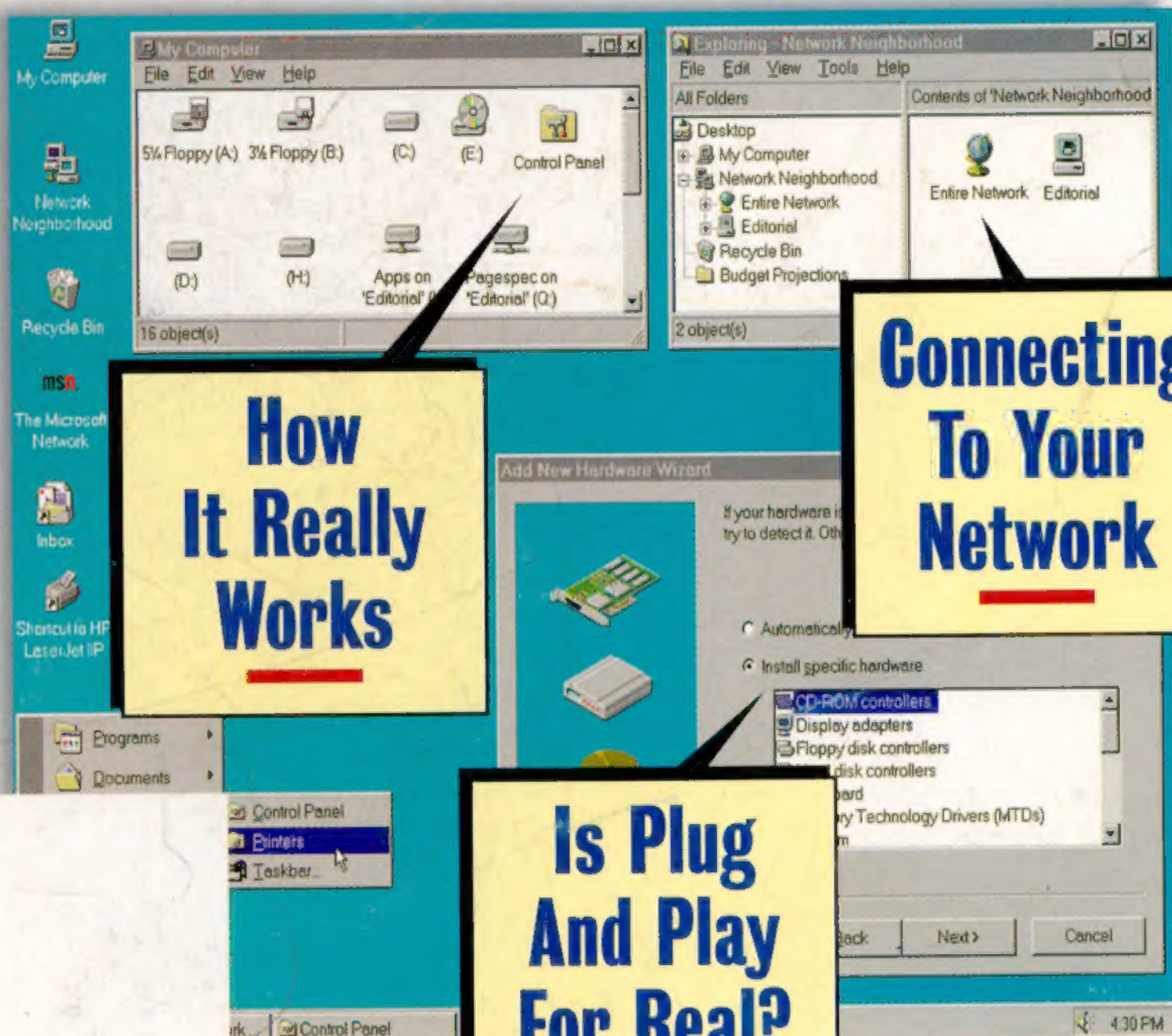
IBM's OS/2 Extends
Its Networking Reach
And Peer Services
With Warp Connect

MAGAZINE

GETTING READY FOR WINDOWS

95

Plus John Dvorak
vs. Jim Seymour
**Warp vs.
Windows**



**How
It Really
Works**

**Connecting
To Your
Network**

**Is Plug
And Play
For Real?**

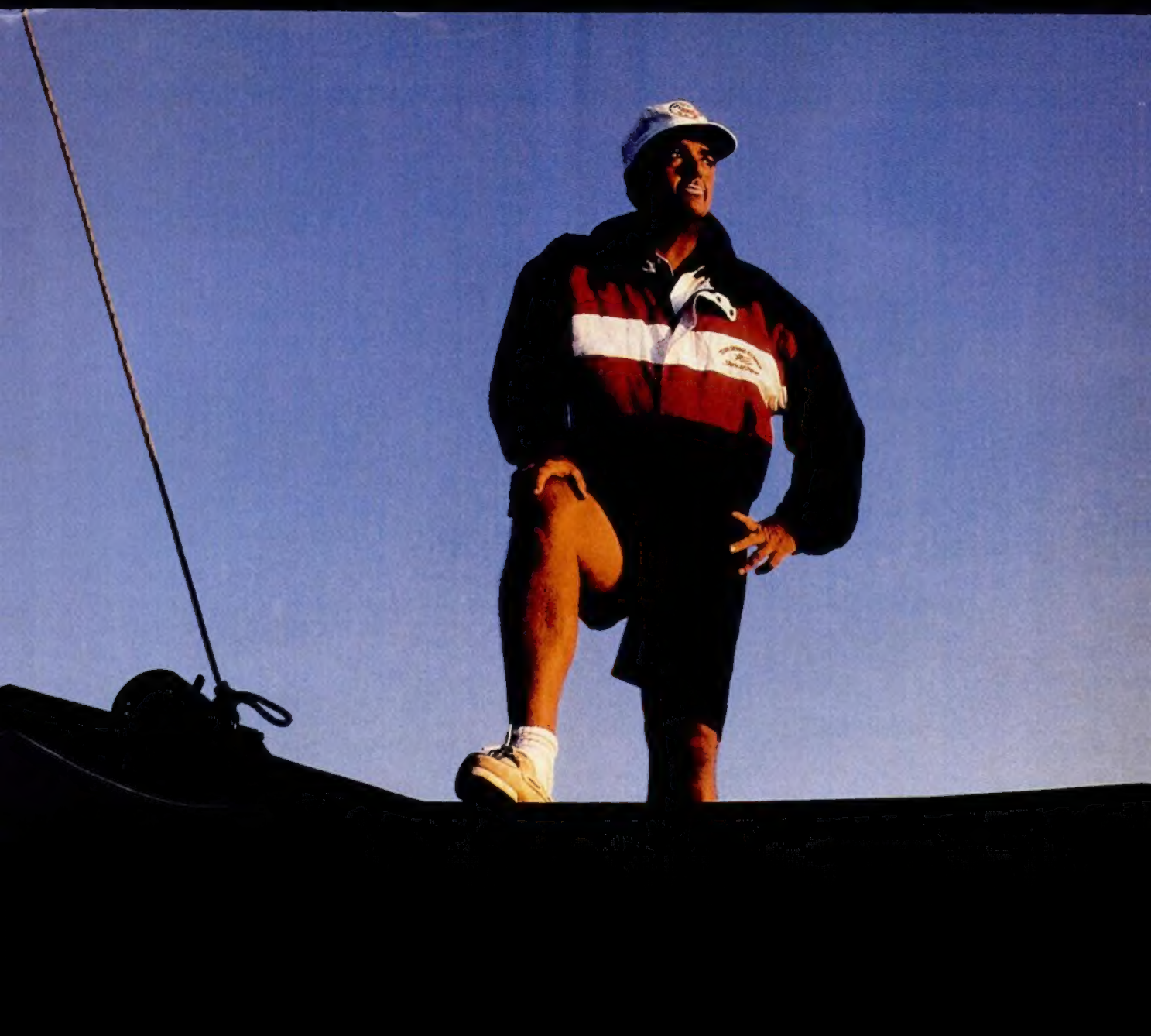


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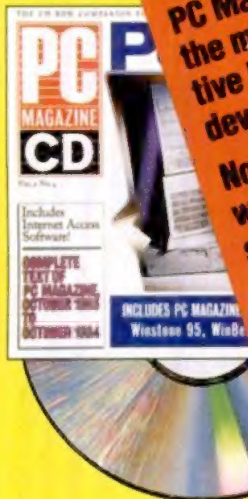
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Inside

Familiarity may breed contempt, but it also breeds a big comfort factor. As unwieldy as WIN.INI is, and as ire-producing as GPFs are, we've become good buddies with Windows 3.x over the last four years. We've tweaked and tuned, installed and

uninstalled, and finally reached a comfortable level of coexistence.

Is it really time to say goodbye? And what are we saying hello to?

In this issue of *PC Magazine* we amass all of our expertise, roll up our sleeves, and dig down deep to help you decide if and when

networking capabilities seriously. And contributing editors John Dvorak and Jim Seymour find themselves on opposite sides of the coin in this year's version of "As the OS Turns."

As ballyhooed as it is, Windows 95 is by far not the only choice.

Throughout our coverage we compare Windows 95's features with those of OS/2 Warp and Windows NT.

This issue also premieres *PC Magazine At Home*. In this new feature, we apply the same rigorous comparative testing to the growing number of home computers as in our reviews of business PCs. We even run a series of software compatibility tests to see which PCs are most likely to succeed with quirky consumer software.



Ehrenman and Flanagan: PC Magazine At Home.

you should make your move.

It's a big issue with lots to digest. Michael Miller, our editor-in-chief, takes you on a guided tour as no one else can. Jeff Proise, our resident operating-system surgeon, takes apart Windows 95 to give you that under-the-hood perspective. Nick Stam and John Clyman tell the hardware side of the story, with hands-on testing of the new Plug and Play boards. Steve Rigney makes it perfectly clear that Windows 95 takes its

We think you'll find the waters considerably less muddy once you read this issue's coverage of Pentium-class home PCs. Gayle Ehrenman (our After Hours editor) and Bill Flanagan (our PCs team's staff writer) didn't get home until the wee hours so that you could make your home state-of-the-art. We will bring *PC Magazine At Home* to you at regular intervals throughout the year to help you keep your home on the cutting edge.—Robin Raskin

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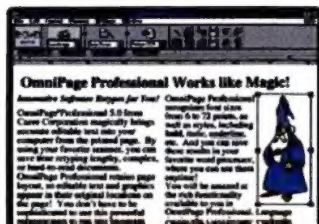


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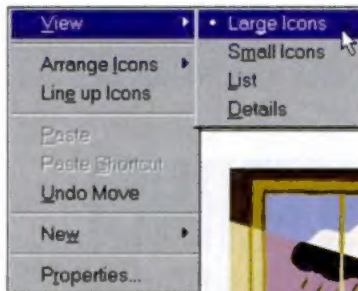
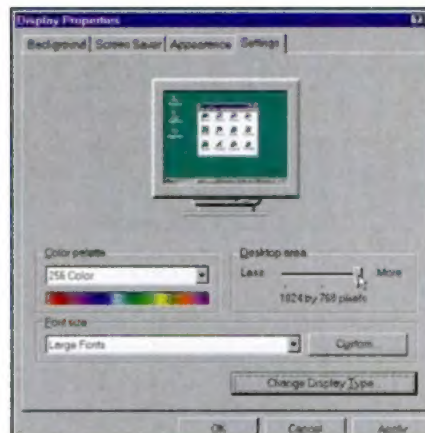
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GETTING READY
FOR WINDOWS 95

BY MICHAEL J. MILLER

In a special four-part story, we examine this much-anticipated operating-system upgrade from every conceivable angle. Come along on a guided tour of Windows 95 and find out what's new, what's hot, and what's not. How does Windows 95 compare with today's Windows? With Windows NT? With OS/2 Warp? Should you plan on upgrading immediately? What are your alternatives? We have the information you need to make your choice.....102



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UNDER THE HOOD:
WINDOWS 95

And Its Competitors

BY JEFF PROSISE

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AFTER HOURS



PC Magazine At Home

A PENTIUM
FOR EVERY HOME

BY ALICE HILL

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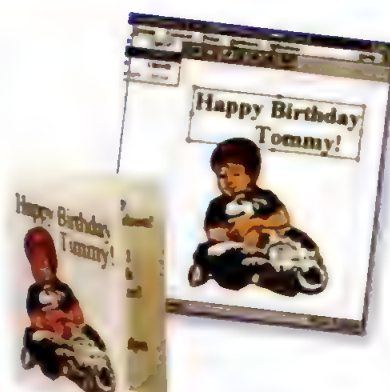
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PC Magazine Reviews

Except where noted: All *PC Magazine* reviews are of currently available products. Benchmark and performance tests are run on Compaq Deskpro 486/33M's.

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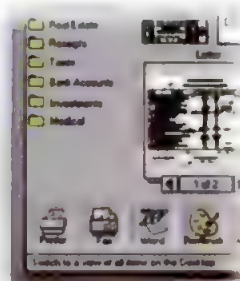
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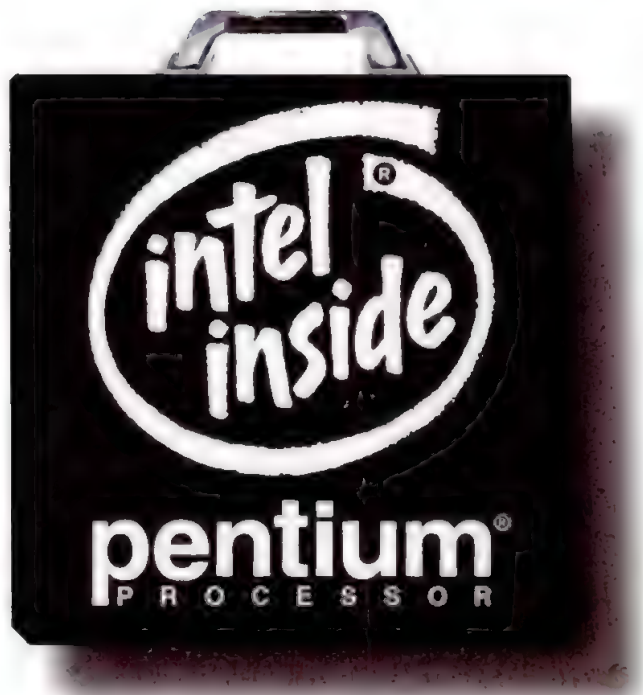
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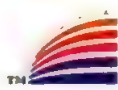
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Letters

CONSUMERS SPEAK OUT

Jim Seymour's column "Consumer Software's New Rules" (January 24, 1995) struck a nerve with our readers, many of whom wrote in with their own horror stories.

All too often, my experience has been similar to Seymour's: "Daddy, why can't you make it work?" I've come to expect anywhere from 30 minutes to a couple of hours setting up my system before I or my children can play a game. I've concluded it's easier to set up individual AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files for each program than to try to have one universal setup.

JOSEPH B. SHAFFER, *via the Internet*

I applaud Seymour's column. It exposes a significant problem that inflicts considerable frustration and dissatisfaction on the average home PC user. Consumer software developers take note: Get out of your vacuum, put yourself in our shoes, and write software that will run where the average PC owner lives and spends his money—out here in the real world.

KEN TURLEY, *Big Timber, Montana*

Recently I purchased the Star Trek Interactive Technical Manual. I installed it on my PC, only to find that it repeatedly caused system crashes. I don't want my money back, however; I spent \$70 on this program because it's the only program of its kind. Perhaps we as consumers should be willing to pay just a little more per title, so that manufacturers can produce workable products and better customer support, and we can avoid disappointing three-year-old children who can't hear Simba roar or grown-ups who want to wander on the *Enterprise*.

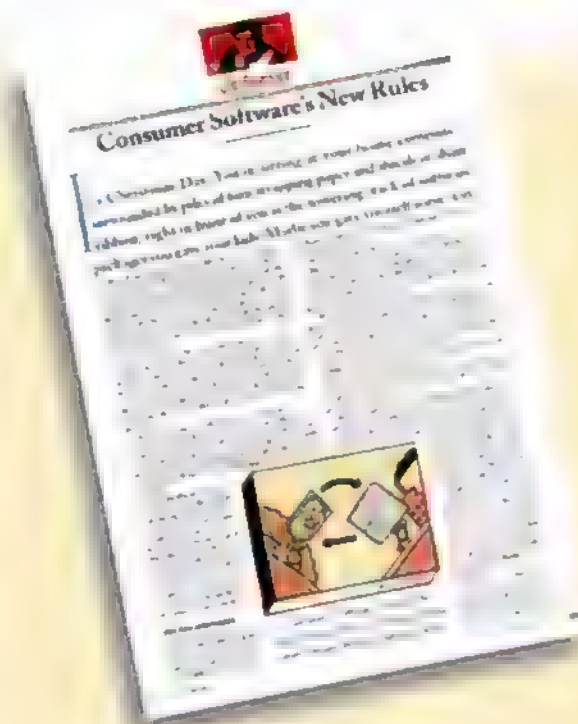
JENNIFER SARANTITES, *via the Internet*

Although I agree with Seymour's column 100 percent, simply returning the software is not always an easy decision, as Seymour indicated. For Christmas, I purchased the Lion King Animated Storybook. In order to make that thing work, I had to download a new video driver, reconfigure Windows, and confer with customer support on three separate occasions. After three weeks of fiddling, my wife imploring me to return the software, and customer support no longer answering my e-mails, I realized it was the implied slight on my computer knowledge that made me refuse to return the merchandise.

JIM WILSON, *via PC MagNet*

As personal-computer users enter the mainstream of consumer electronics, the issues Seymour addresses will increasingly become a headache for new software users. I applaud Seymour for bringing them to light.

JERRY COBB, *via the Internet*



Developers need to write software that runs in the real world of PC owners.

Seymour missed a perfectly good argument against buggy consumer software: The Uniform Commercial Code's Implied Warranty of Merchantability states that goods must be fit for the ordinary purposes for which they are sold. If software has known bugs that prevent it from being used fully, then the sale can be interpreted as a breach of this warranty. More consumers need to assert their rights in this area.

DOUGLAS M. FLAGG, *via the Internet*

Seymour was right to give IBM's OS/2 Warp a thumbs down for its terrible installation routine. But his suggestion that buyers turn it into shelfware is the wrong answer. The answer is to treat software like any other defective, fraudulently marketed product: Demand a refund. Only by making the dealer and IBM accountable is justice done, and perhaps then vendors will finally learn something. If everyone were to return a product, how long do you think it would take to fix the problems?

DAVID NASON, *via the Internet*

GOVERNMENT TIES THAT BIND

Given the problematic social issues that evolve along with telecommunications, it's inevitable that government will become more involved in information technology (Bill Howard, "Mr. PC Goes to Washington," January 24, 1995). High tech creates as many problems as opportunities, and the private sector is unlikely to address them all. By way of analogy, would we prefer no government involvement in roads, and the elimination of those annoying, government-mandated stop signs?

RON LEGRO, *via the Internet*

All in all, Howard's comments are right on the money. Some things are better off without the government's involvement.

AL RECHANY, *via the Internet*

HEY, MR. POSTMAN!

In addition to the measures John C. Dvorak outlined in his column "E-Mail Love and War Stories" (January 24, 1995), there's a simple and easy way to increase your Internet e-mail security: encryption. If the unfortunate lovers had used, say PGP, 99 extra recipients would have been confronted with ASCII garbage—instead of a love letter.

PATRICK LAMB, *via the Internet*

E-mail can't be unsent, but mail sent the old-fashioned way can. Dropping a letter in a mailbox isn't equivalent to hitting the Send button; you can "unmail" a letter at any time until it is actually delivered.

STEVEN GOLDBERG, *New York, New York*

Dvorak touched on several key areas and good ideas; however, I was surprised he didn't mention encryption. Encryption is the closest thing to putting a private e-mail letter in a sealed envelope. Most people would never think of writing a personal love letter on a postcard.

JOHN WILSON, *via the Internet*

AS THE MICROSOFT TURNS

Michael J. Miller's remarks in his column "The World According to Microsoft" (January 24, 1995) are on target. Microsoft has achieved dominance by doing a better job of giving customers what they want—or think they want—and doing so through excellent marketing and a solid product line. Those who decry Microsoft's dominance take heart: If Microsoft ships a flub in Windows 95, OS/2 Warp might jump in and fill the void, at last creating a competitive environment for operating systems. Microsoft is on top only because we voted them there with our wallets.

MICHAEL J. ZAMBETTI, JR., *via the Internet*

BACK IT UP

A hearty commendation on your article "The Bigger Backup" (February 7, 1995). The importance of backup can't be overstressed. Unfortunately, backing up is like going to the dentist—everyone agrees it's necessary, but few relish the task.

BOB ZEIDMAN, *via the Internet*

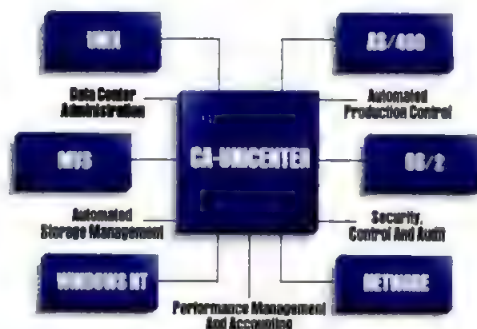
The roundup of tape backup solutions was certainly impressive. But it was useless to those of us who use OS/2, as there was no mention of the systems these devices can back up.

DON MESSENGER, *via the Internet*

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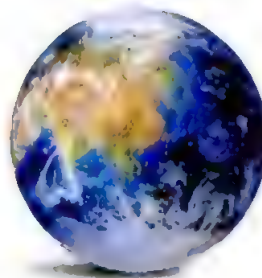


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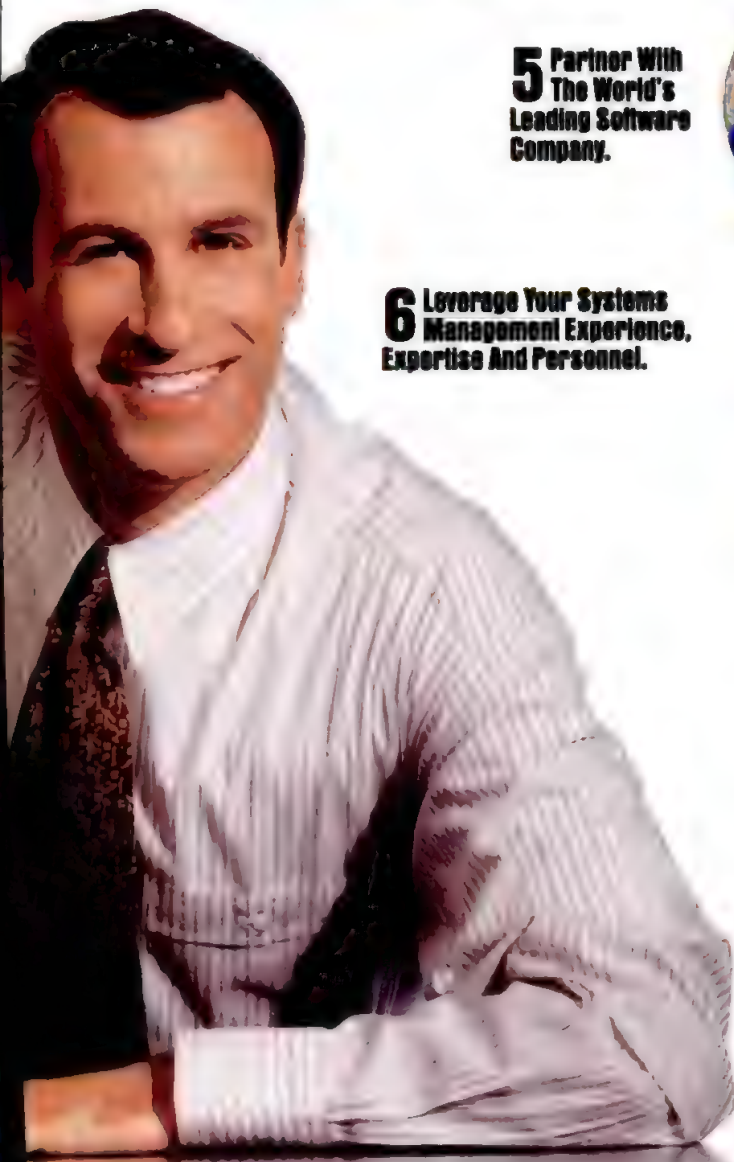


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Letters

Your article completely missed the point of tape backups. You say not a word about compatibility and reliability, which are far more important than the performance speed of a backup drive. An unreliable backup is worthless no matter how fast it is.

ROLAND DEWIT, *Potomac, Maryland*

INFRARED'S CROSSED WIRES

In general I like Jim Seymour's idea of infrared networks ("IR: Fast, Cheap, and Soon Ubiquitous," February 7, 1995). But I have nightmares about Seymour's scenario of making "an IR modem link to an airport or airline travel club pay phone, without our little 'defeat the phone system' toolkits." Because then everyone in my general area could also see what I was transmitting.

BRUCE O'NEEL, *via the Internet*

The idea that every hotel will soon have an IR port sounds wonderful, but I'm willing to bet that you won't see it happen this century. Today, you're lucky just to find a hotel with a modular connector or phone jack near the desk, let alone something as sophisticated as digital phone lines.

JOEL F. BERMAN, *via the Internet*

REVEALING CODES

Two thumbs down to your First Looks review describing WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows' Reveal Codes window as "awkward" ("WordPerfect Adds Speed and Grace to Power," January 24, 1995). When using my Microsoft Word 6.0, which has now become a dust collector, I'm not sure that the esteemed Sherlock Holmes could always figure out what's going

HOW TO CONTACT US--

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We regret that we cannot answer letters individually. To

send submissions for PC Solutions, please see the sidebar "How to Contact Us" on the second page of that column.



CORRECTIONS AND AMPLIFICATIONS

In our roundup of tax preparation software ("Happy Returns After a Taxing Year," February 21, 1995), we recognized Intuit's TurboTax for Windows Headstart edition with an Editors' Choice award. *PC Magazine* wants to alert readers to the fact that in specific circumstances calculation errors have been identified by Intuit in the final versions of TurboTax for Windows and TurboTax Multimedia. Contact Intuit at 800-224-0948 for further information.

We similarly want to alert readers that several bugs have been identified in Block Financial Software's TaxCut, a package we also recommended highly in the same roundup. Contact Block Financial Software at 800-829-1829 or via fax at 800-944-6322 for further information.

on in a document. On the other hand, with WordPerfect's Reveal Codes window, even my child can do so.

ROGER ROTHERBERGER, *Hamilton, Georgia*

ADULT DECISIONS

I wholeheartedly share John C. Dvorak's opinion (Inside Track, January 24, 1995) that pornographic—er, pardon me—"adult entertainment" software products should not be mixed in with the business and developer products at Comdex. I only wish *PC Magazine* would come to its senses and rid an otherwise fine magazine of sleazy pornographic advertising.

PATRICK COLVIN, *via the Internet*

We, too, constantly find ourselves grappling with this problem. Historically, as magazine publishers, PC Magazine and Ziff-Davis Publishing Company have believed the proper course of action is to offer a wide latitude for disseminating information about all computer-related goods and services.—Ed.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Although I agreed with most of Charles Petzold's article "Why Windows 95? A Historical Overview" (January 24, 1995), I couldn't let this one slip by. Petzold says that Microsoft learned from IBM's mistake of asking people to learn a new environment. If this was true, why are there so many Windows APIs?

ROBERT D. MISIAK, *via the Internet*

Windows users are not wedded to their interface; Microsoft acknowledges this by their significant update to the interface for Windows 95. Once forced to migrate to a new interface, users can find both Windows 95 and OS/2 equally appealing. Inertia, as Petzold says, is not the major discriminant between these two platforms.

RICHARD ENG, *via the Internet*

TAXING TIMES

As a longtime TurboTax user, I agree that TurboTax got the interface right this year ("Happy Returns After a Taxing Year," February 21, 1995). For the past several years, the failure of TurboTax to become easier to use with experience was annoying, but the switch from last year's unfriendly style to the easy-to-

use version this year is much appreciated.

CHRIS G. WHIPPLE, *via the Internet*

In truth, when you review a product, it is only part of the story. It would be beneficial to your readers to expand your focus and also review the company behind the product—especially as it relates to the manner in which the company services its customers: avenues made available for accessing assistance, response time to inquiries, the quality of service, and the like. We as consumers are buying the entire package, not just the software, and we don't want to be sold a bill of goods.

BOB JOHNSON, *via the Internet*

I've used tax preparation software for many years, and have used electronic banking for many more years. I do it because it is convenient and saves me money. If the IRS really wants taxpayers to file electronically, then the price, which now ranges from \$15 to \$20 or more per return, must come down. The advantages for taxpayers and the government are tremendous, both in reducing errors and lowering the cost of processing returns. Saving the paper isn't a bad idea either. But the taxpayer's paying a \$15-plus surcharge to save the government money is not really encouraging. Eliminate the cost and let the taxpayer realize the benefit of quicker refunds without the additional cost to them, and the goal of 94 percent electronic returns by 2000 is not farfetched.

STEVE MEYER, *via the Internet*

Your review of tax software was both accurate and useful. All in all, I've found TurboTax satisfactory at getting the job done as painlessly as possible. I like the fact that the look and feel does not change significantly from year to year. My only complaint was regarding one item that did not get appropriately transferred on the form; TurboTax's response was that one can enter the numbers manually on the state form. Ha!

KURT WOLFSBERG, *via PC MagNet*

Next year's tax software review should contain a customer-service rating based on the experiences of this year. Looking through the CompuServe and other on-line forums for tax software should give you the data you need for rating customer service.

DAVID M. ABBOTT, *via PC MagNet*

WE'VE ALWAYS SAID OUR MONITORS ARE TRIUMPHS OF TECHNOLOGY. NOW, IT'S OFFICIAL.



The Nokia 447X has just been named a Best Buy by *PC World*. This adds to a long and growing list of awards and honors for Nokia monitors.

Ever since their introduction in the U.S., Nokia has been recognized by editors and sophisticated users alike as technologically superior. The displays are brilliant and tack-sharp. The ergonomics are an exuberant expression of Nokia's European home.

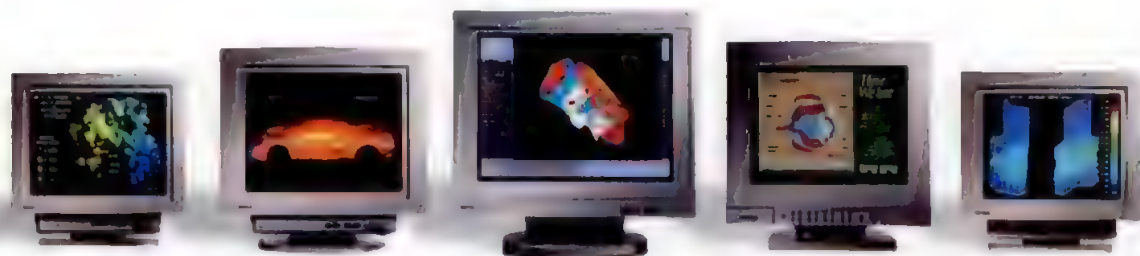
Nokia "firsts" read like a history of advanced monitor technology; including the world's first TCO and MPR II-certified emissions control and the first all digital monitors with on-screen menu controls.

As the need for quality monitors expands into

more homes and businesses, the appreciation of Nokia excellence grows with it. And, as more people look into Nokias, they are finding more than technical superiority. They're finding superior value.

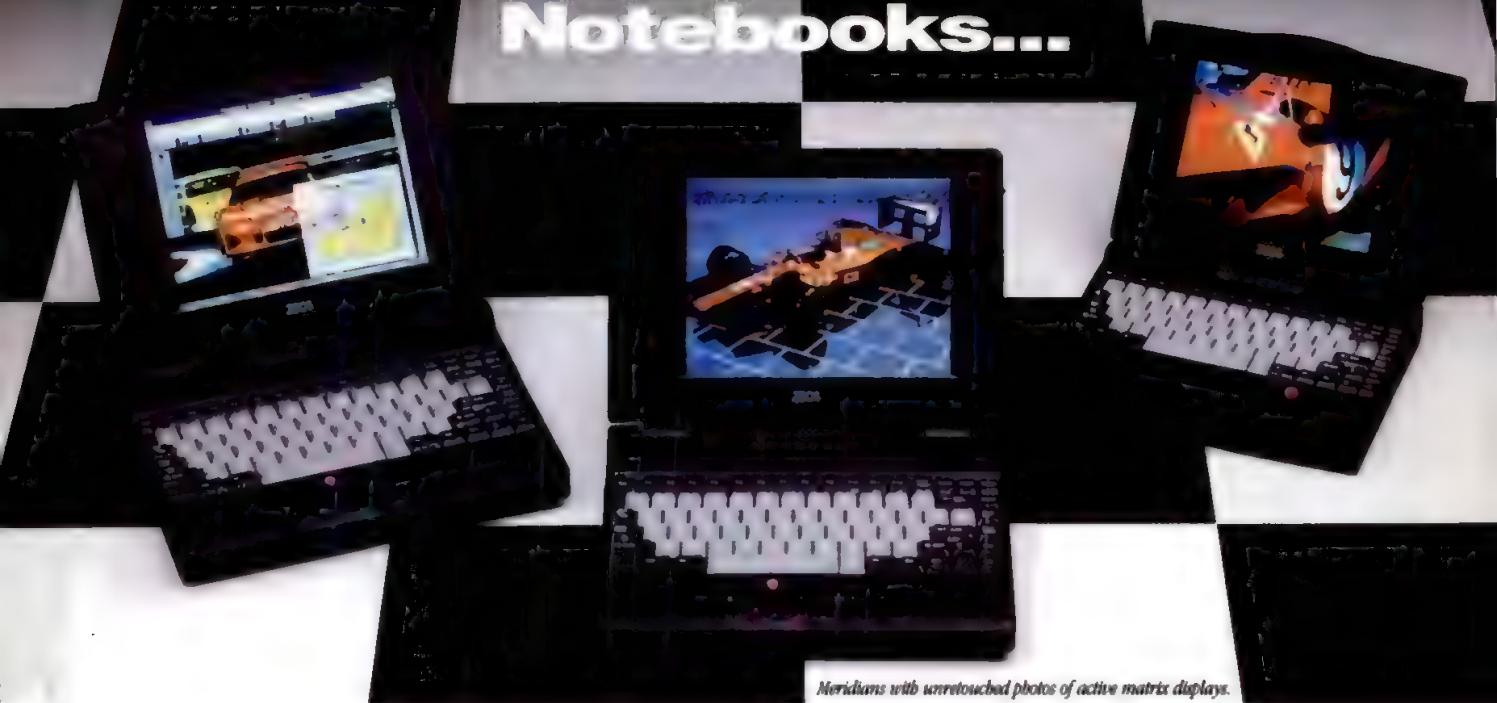
So if you're considering an upgrade of your monitor, be sure to consider a Nokia. Obviously, the experts already consider them the best you can buy. For more information and the name of a dealer near you, please contact us at 1.800.BY NOKIA.

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Meridian 400 Subnotebook

At 3.9 pounds, the Meridian 400 subnotebook is molded from a special carbon-fiber material that cuts weight and improves durability. And with your choice of a 486DX2-50 or DX4-100 processor, hard drives to 350MB, and RAM that's user upgradable to 20MB, this notebook is "faster than a speeding desktop," as *Computer Shopper* said.

PC World agrees: "Featherlight, blazingly fast, elegantly designed... richly deserves its Mobile PCs power ranking."

The 400 features three screen options: active color and dual-scan color or monochrome. You also get two Type II PCMCIA slots and an

external ultra-light (9 oz.) 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive (included in Packages 2 and 3).

Meridian 800 Notebook

"With its sleek styling, solid construction and hot performance, the Meridian 800C justifiably earns its place at the top...." reported *Windows Sources*.

We couldn't agree more! At 6.3 pounds, the Meridian 800 full-size notebook is light enough to travel anywhere yet it's large enough to use for presentations and everyday computing. And with your choice of a 486DX2-50 or DX4-100 processor, removable hard drives now to 528MB, and RAM that's user upgradable to 20MB, this notebook is the raciest thing around.

For your viewing pleasure, the 800 is available with your choice of color displays—a whopping 10.3" dual scan or 9.5" active. You also get two Type II or one Type III PCMCIA slots, and an internal 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive.

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viewing, the 850 is available with your choice of color displays—a mammoth 10.3" (800 x 600 resolution) dual scan or 9.5" active matrix. You also get 16-bit stereo sound through audio jacks (Sound Blaster Pro compatible) for the best in portable multimedia, two Type II or one Type III PCMCIA slots, and an internal 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive.

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	Active Color	400A	800A	Active Color	400A	800A	Active Color	400A	800A
	486DX2-50	\$2695	\$3095	486DX2-50	\$2995	\$3295	486DX2-50	CNI! \$3295	CNI! \$3695
	DX4-100	\$3095	\$3495	DX4-100	\$3395	\$3695	DX4-100	CNI! \$3695	CNI! \$3995
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	Pentium-75	\$3495	Pentium-75	\$3995	Pentium-75	\$4395
	Active Color	850A	Active Color	850A	Active Color	850A
	Pentium-75	\$4295	Pentium-75	\$4795	Pentium-75	\$5195
	➤ 8MB RAM, 256K synchronous SRAM cache ➤ 528MB IDE hard drive ➤ Internal 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive ➤ Integrated 16-bit stereo sound ➤ MS-DOS 6.2, Windows for Workgroups 3.11		➤ 16MB RAM, 256K synchronous SRAM cache ➤ 528MB IDE hard drive ➤ Internal 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive ➤ Integrated 16-bit stereo sound ➤ Custom carrying case ➤ Extra battery ➤ MS-DOS 6.2, Windows for Workgroups 3.11 ➤ Lotus Organizer		➤ 16MB RAM, 256K synchronous SRAM cache ➤ 810MB IDE hard drive ➤ Internal 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive ➤ Integrated 16-bit stereo sound ➤ 14.4 PCMCIA fax/modem ➤ Custom carrying case ➤ Extra battery ➤ MS-DOS 6.2, Windows for Workgroups 3.11 ➤ Lotus Organizer	

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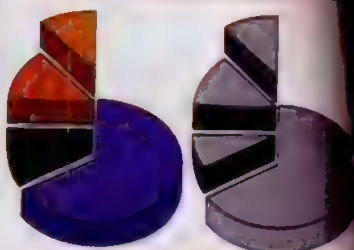
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(1) CARR Report No. 110-14 "Color Color Increases Advertising Reader-ship." Colliers Publishing Co.
(2) Update on color documents on sales effectiveness of BNP color ads 630% improvement in color versus black and white ads. 1988, Newsday per Advertising of America.



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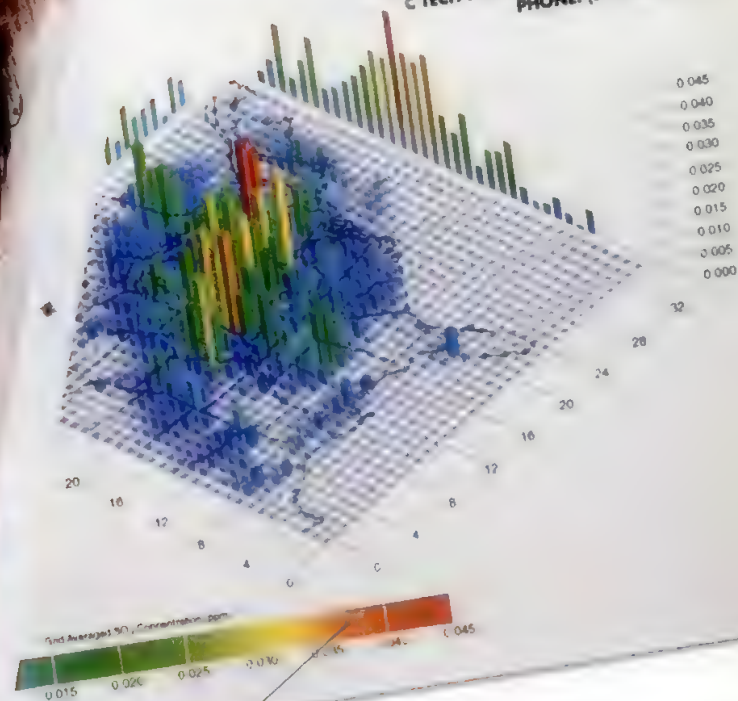


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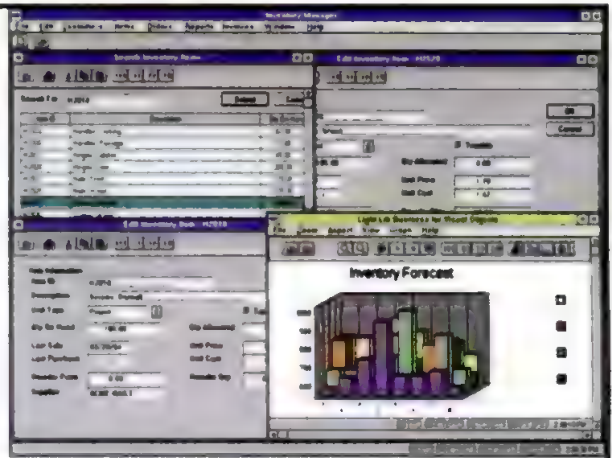
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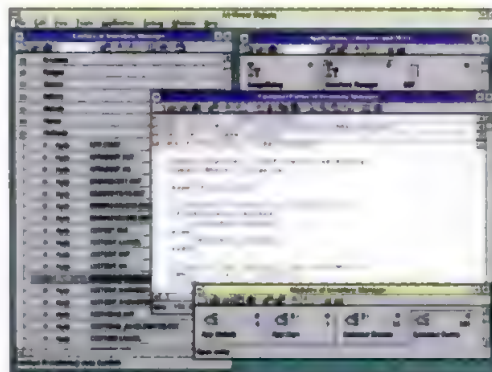
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TRENDS & TECHNOLOGY SHAPING THE PERSONAL COMPUTER MARKET

Building PCs in Less Time

New FCC rules will speed PCs to market.

How can a six-hour test cripple a product launch? Every year, inside a converted barn at Rockford Engineering Services, hundreds of the latest PCs undergo a six-hour test for radio emissions before they can be certified by the Federal Communications



Proposed changes in the FCC-certification procedure, including radio-emissions tests, could shave six weeks off the process.

Commission and sold to the public. Under the existing procedure, once products pass the test at an independent lab such as Rockford Engineering in St. Leonard, Maryland, applications go to the FCC, which then takes four to six weeks to grant certification.

With product life cycles that are often as short as six months, a month-long delay for processing FCC applications represents a significant portion of the market life for PCs. "It could take six weeks and \$70,000 to get six products approved," says Brent Alexander of Rockford, which does compliance testing for Acer, Logitech, Micron, and several motherboard manufacturers. "What small vendor can afford that?"

Since manufacturers find the certifica-

tion process time-consuming and expensive, the FCC has proposed some changes that would streamline compliance, making it easier and faster for manufacturers to get PCs and peripherals onto the market.

Under the new proposed rules, the testing labs could immediately certify the products. "Even the small guys will be able to get hot products out right away," says Alexander. The emissions tests ensure that the radio noise generated by PCs and peripherals is "quiet" enough not to interfere with radio

signals from police, ambulance, and fire communications, radio and television broadcasting, and air traffic control.

The new rules would also allow the certification of individual components—the chassis, power supply, and motherboard—so that vendors can mix and match preapproved components. Under existing rules, every configuration must be approved, which means testing fees add up quickly.

In Europe, manufacturers are already permitted to self-declare compliance with radio-noise standards. For many manufacturers, the next step would be one set of worldwide standards for interference, emissions, and power consumption. They say it would be easier to build a PC to the toughest spec than to build to multiple specs.—Carol Levin

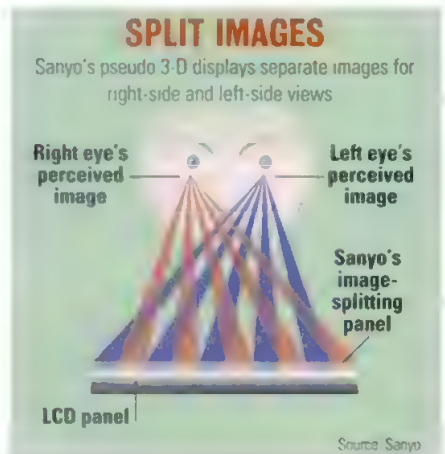
Looks Like 3-D, No Glasses Required

BACK IN THE 1950s, THERE WERE 3-D movies. A few years ago, 3-D greeting cards and posters became the rage. Now, Sanyo has developed a series of low-cost pseudo 3-D display systems that don't require custom 3-D glasses and come in 4-inch, 6-inch, and 10-inch display sizes. The displays are thin-film transistor (TFT) LCDs, which keeps the cost down and means they can be small enough to be integrated into consumer electronics products.

To simulate a 3-D image, Sanyo developed an image-splitter panel that separates images into right-side and left-side views. When the panel is at the right distance from the underlying pixels on an LCD panel, the pixels from one image are directed to the left eye and the pixels from a different image are directed to the right eye. To view a conventional 2-D image, you simply flip a switch. Video also appears to have three dimensions when viewed through the image-splitting panel.

The pseudo-3-D technology has not made its way into products yet, but it will by the end of this year, Sanyo says. The technology is targeted first for consumer electronics products such as videophones, personal game units, car navigation systems, and television. Later, it will be showing up in 3-D simulation systems for schools, hospitals, and museums.

—Sebastian Rupley



Pipeline *By Robin Raskin* Bugs in Your Bonnets

An open letter to the general press and anyone else who expects perfection in computers.

Seems like it's politically correct to be a bug-basher these days. What with the Pentium floating-point bug (December 1994), the Disney *Lion King* problem (January 1995), the Intuit tax mess (March 1995), and the H&R Block TaxCut mess, the press has become vigilant in its quest to expose bugs. (I find myself scouring the pages of *The Wall Street Journal* for the latest bug reports. . . Who woulda thunk it?) The press has even become influential in assessing proper remunerations for their readers.

I have to believe that it's the pressure of "bad ink" that helped Intel decide to replace defective Pentium chips at no cost to users. It helped Intuit decide to pay any IRS penalties derived from bugs in its products. (Disney and H&R Block have been less contrite.) While the press should be applauded for disseminating timely bug information, you have to wonder whether it's ultimately fueling a false sense of expectations about computer software.



The press appears to have lost sight of the fact that bugs have a longstanding tradition in our industry. Bugs are not new, and they will never go away. As a matter of fact, software products are more stable than ever before. The press seems fixated on the consumer market, where readers—after having spent \$2,500 on a PC and \$50 on the promise of a software "experience"—can become apoplectic about the possibility of a bug. Bugs like those

in Lotus Organizer or Word 6.0 that can cripple an entire organization tend to go unreported.

It's time to move beyond bellyaching about bugs and start influencing change—the most important of which is a change in attitude. Here are some worthwhile attitude adjustments.

For Users: Bugs are part and parcel of computing. Get used to it. Think of computing as you think about the birth of a child: It's so complicated that it's truly amazing that anything goes right. Don't be shy about calling tech support, but be able to supply basic information, including your configuration and what you did that led you to the bug. If they try to stick you with a tech support charge for reporting a bug, scream bloody murder and call the press!

For Vendors: Instill a zero-defects mentality in your staff. You can't afford not to, even if it's at the expense of adding that next hot feature. Make it easy for your customers to report bugs, and don't ever doubt your customers. They're always right. Build software with bug-fixing in mind. There are well-known techniques such as moving routines that have high-bug potential to Dynamic Link Libraries (DLLs), which are easier to replace than entire applications. Prepare for large beta tests. Fix bugs immediately, not in the next release.

Most difficult, but most important: There's got to be a change in perceptions. Unearthing a bug needs to be seen as a good deed, a cause for celebration and reward. If users find "reasonable and reproducible" bugs, they've helped you. Reward them. Give them their money back. Give them a free lifetime subscription. Give them anything, but let them know they've done you a favor. Finally, call the press immediately if you do have a bug. It'll be worse if they think they've caught you playing ostrich.

Robin Raskin is the editor of PC Magazine.

Pay Now—or You'll Pay Later

EIGHT YEARS AGO, THE COST OF owning a PC for corporate use for five years was about \$19,000. Today, it's more than \$40,000, according to estimates by the Gartner Group. To lower the long-term cost of PC ownership, manufacturers are designing PCs with new features aimed to minimize downtime and improve management.

Technical support, training, inventory, upgrades, downtime, and data loss account for four-fifths of the cost of PC ownership over a five-year period, according to the research. "Buyers haven't paid enough attention to maintaining PCs once they belong to the organization," says William Kirwin, an analyst at the Gartner Group. "In the past couple of years, companies have been looking for ways to lower the cost of PC ownership."

Compaq, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, and other PC makers are all trumpeting manageability. Compaq, for instance, is overhauling its entire Deskpro line with an emphasis on lowering the long-term cost of ownership. The

high-end machines will have "intelligent manageability" features for asset control, fault management, and security. Compaq has teamed with disk-drive makers Conner, Quantum, and Seagate on "IntelliSafe" hard disks, which monitor drives and provide pre-

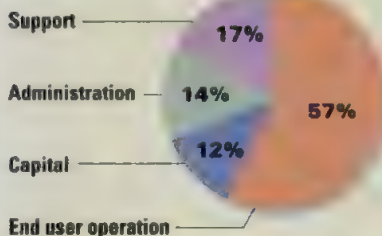
failure notification. In the initial implementation, the hard disk warns of problems on boot-up. In the Windows 95 implementation, remote management agents will allow network administrators to respond to predicted problems. If a failure does occur on a client's hard disk, a network agent can initiate tape backup. Explains Andrew Watson, director of desktop marketing at Compaq, "We're adding a little bit of cost to the product, but in the long run, it really saves a lot of money."

PC buyers also want help managing their total system investment. According to a recent Louis Harris poll on satisfaction with PC service and support, commissioned by Dell Computer, vendors fail to take responsibility for customer satisfaction over the lifetime of products. "Customers want vendors to deal with the notebooks they're replacing, transfer software to the new machines, install network adapters and software at the factory, and even preinstall custom applications. Customers want suppliers to help them anticipate changes in technology, providing 18-month technology roadmaps," says Michael Dell, CEO of Dell Computer.

—Carol Levin and Melissa Perenson

COST OF PC OWNERSHIP

The purchase price of a PC for corporate use is only a small part of the overall cost.



Source: Gartner Group

Wavelet-Compressed, Ultra-Tiny Files

TO HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF file obesity, the Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC), a university-linked organization focusing on research in information systems, energy, the environment, and biotechnology, has developed compression software called HARC-C, which puts a new spin on traditional ways to squish data.

"We've demonstrated video at 38 frames per second at 640-by-480 resolution and 16-bit color on a 486 notebook with 4MB of memory. No one else can do that in software," says Andrew Blanchard, director of the Strategic Technology Applications Research Center at HARC. As with any compression technology, the trick is to reduce nonessential information without sacrificing image quality.

HARC-C is based on *wavelet image compression*, a technique that describes data in terms of its frequency, energy, and timing, and "remembers" certain attributes of an image. "Once we have an attribute and a location, we have a very efficient way of describing an image," says Blanchard. According to HARC, the algorithm typical-

ly compresses images at a ratio of 300:1, which reduces a 2.4MB file to 8K. The best effort to date is 450:1 without noticeable quality degradation or artifacts.



The original image (left) was compressed with HARC-C at 300:1 with minimal degradation (right).

Other compression techniques, such as JPEG and MPEG, use *discrete cosine transform*, which has difficulty remembering attribute locations and requires a special encoding process to recover that information. "Some of the other compression techniques throw away critical information in order to get compression ratios that are reasonable. That's why you see the images degrade," says

Blanchard. And while other compression technologies are single-purpose, HARC-C works on still images, video, sound, and text. It's also able to split big images into segments and feed individual "tiles" to different processors. A mathematical technique called *boundary-spline-wavelet* then stitches the image back together.

While the technological hurdle was getting HARC-C to work in software while maintaining image quality, the next challenge is to get it into desktop applications. For now, HARC is working with vertical markets such as satellite imagery, telepathology, and telerradiology, and it is also talking with business partners about building it into CD-ROMs.

—Carol Levin

Digital Visionaries

GREG BLONDER, DIRECTOR OF THE Human-Centered Engineering Research Lab at Bell Laboratories in Murray Hill, New Jersey, is investigating what people want to do with computers in the future. He believes that lack of innovation is stalling the PC industry, and has some interesting ideas about what's



Bell Labs' Greg Blonder

needed to jump start it. His theory of "dominant design" raises a warning flag: No one is innovating; they're just imitating.

PC Magazine: *Where will the next big breakthroughs in computing come from?*

Greg Blonder: Because of the "groupthink" that goes on in the PC industry, real innovation is going to come from a different industry or from some other platform. It could come from television, Hollywood, the communications industry, or from somewhere entirely unexpected. The innovation driver may be a product or service for constant two-way communications. Wireless technology might make a difference in what the operating system ought to

be. When you talk about portable devices with communications, that's not at all like DOS or Windows. It's about lightweight systems with an entirely different view of what matters. That could be it.

PCM: *What will computers look like in the future?*

G.B.: Computers are going to make fundamental changes in our behavior, but we won't think of them as computers because they'll be invisible. These hidden computers will provide experts' advice and projections about the future, something computers are getting very good at now. You might be an architect licensed in New Jersey, and you get a contract to build a house in New York. The expert system will tell you the changes you have to make in order to meet all the zoning codes in New York. It's an absolutely predictive problem that a computer can handle very well.

PCM: *Will on-line services continue to grow rapidly?*

G.B.: Despite all the hype, there are no more than 5 million people who use the Internet or on-line services in a robust way on a daily basis. What are the other millions of households going to do with this capability? People have always done more or less the same things except in different venues. As

more users got involved, they've completely warped the Internet so that it's now a communications medium. It's a sign that people mold computers in their own image rather than the other way around.

PCM: *Why do you think that innovation is stalling in the PC industry?*

G.B.: Surprisingly, one of the reasons why computers aren't innovative is because the marketplace for computers has perfect communication between all the users.

The Japanese came up with a different way of building cars because they were 10,000 miles away from Detroit. They had a different environment around them, and it forced them to do things differently. But the computer industry is on the opposite side of the spectrum. It sounds silly to say that perfect communication is bad, but I genuinely think that's why there's such a paucity of innovation. What happens is that oddball software hardly ever gets a chance to get a foothold. There used to be a difference between DOS and Apple, which gave people a reason to choose. Then Microsoft copied the design, made Windows dominant, and now there's no choice. Dominant designs aren't always efficient. They often arise through the happenstance of history. It's very difficult to displace the dominant design.—Carol Levin

Folio's On-Line Business Library

FOLIO CORP., A DIVISION OF THE publishing giant Reed Elsevier, is building a global open model for anybody who wants to bring business documents and publications on-line. By joining with partners who provide metering, security, electronic copyright, and global networks, Folio's Information Marketplace is targeted as a full-service clearing house to keep corporations from worrying about sticky issues surrounding business publishing on-line. Several key partners, including AT&T, Novell, and Powersoft are betting that Folio's strategy is more than just another late entry in the electronic publishing race.

The crucial links in Folio's strategy are its "InfoApps" and "Infobases," both of which leverage Folio's sophisticated electronic publishing and text-retrieval software. Using InfoApp toolkits from Folio (Novell and PowerSoft are partners working on the toolkits), corporate developers are expected to build customized, highly searchable, metering-enabled documents and publications to sell on-line via wide area networks (see diagram). Through built-in metering,

InfoApp builders will accrue a percentage of the transaction fee (as will Folio) each time an electronic document is accessed.

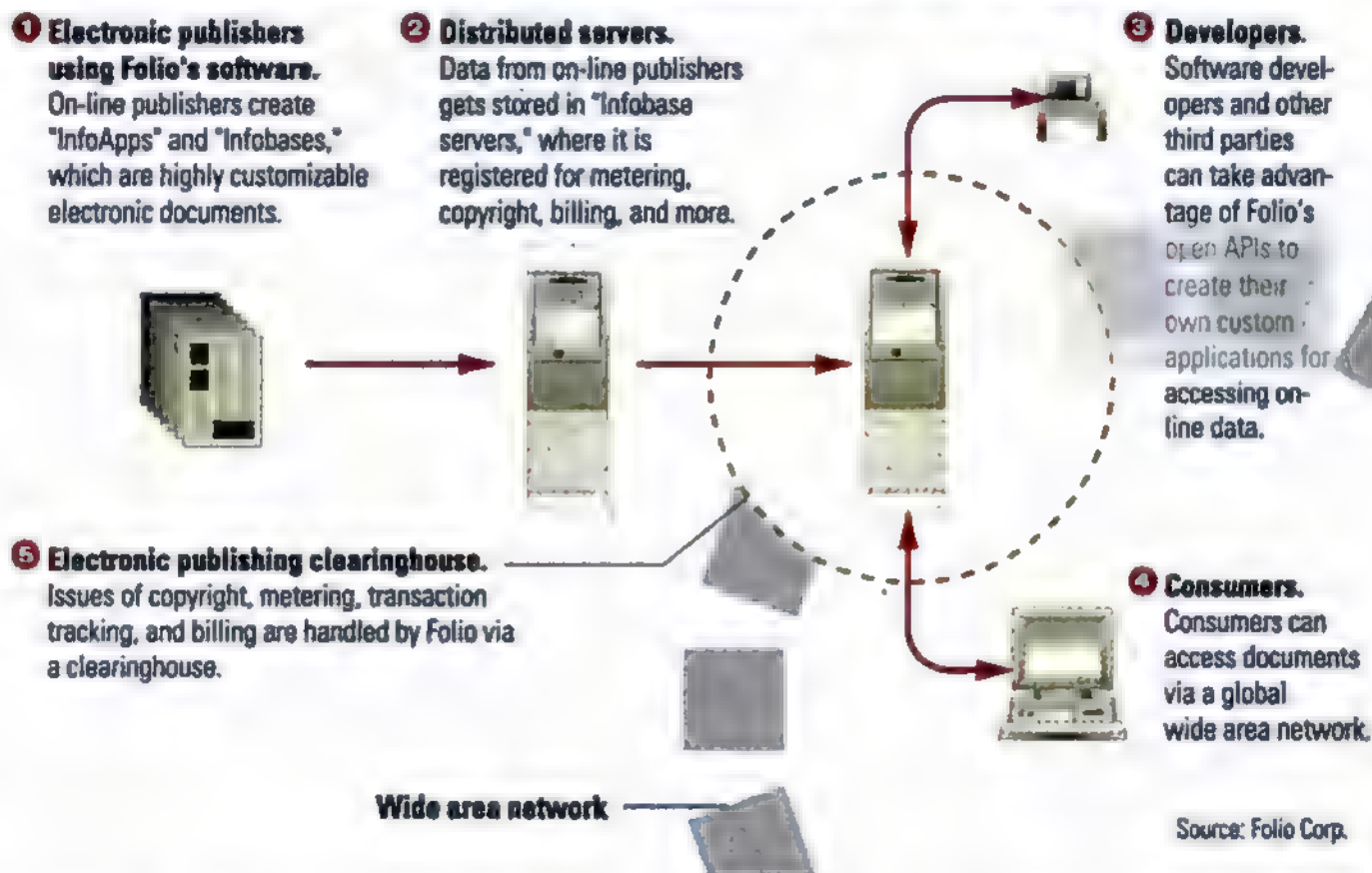
AT&T is in partnership with Folio to

publications such as *The Wall Street Journal* for selected business information and perform simple searches. But Folio's InfoApps and Infobases transform electronic documents into text databases, allowing for very advanced searching and sorting.

A second possible advantage to Folio's

THE INFORMATION MARKETPLACE

Folio's strategy is an open model for publishing corporate libraries and business periodicals. Documents in InfoApp and Infobase format are offered for sale via wide area networks, including the Internet.



Top Retail Software

Current ranking	Last issue	Product/company
1	7	MS-DOS 6.22 Upgrade Microsoft Corp.
2	1	Turbo Tax Federal 1994 Final Edition Intuit
3	—	QEMM 7.5 Quaterdeck Office Systems
4	—	WinCheckIt 2.0 Touchstone Software
5	3	Procomm Plus for Windows 2.1 Datastorm
6	4	WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows Upgrade Novell
7	—	Delphi 1.0 Borland International
8	6	Uninstaller 2.0 MicroHelp
9	—	MS Windows 3.11 Microsoft Corp.
10	—	WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows Novell
This list ranks PC business programs according to the total number of copies shipped to over 12,000 stores and resellers in the week ending March 4, 1995; the list cannot be interpreted as a picture of the entire software market. Adapted from a compilation by Ingram Micro.		

provide the global network infrastructure, and several large corporations interested in publishing via Folio's model have already signed on to put their corporate libraries on-line via Folio's InfoApps. Publishers can also create simple Infobases, which are basic electronic documents that take advantage of Folio's powerful text-retrieval tools, and then post the documents on the World-Wide Web, via Folio's Infobase Web Server.

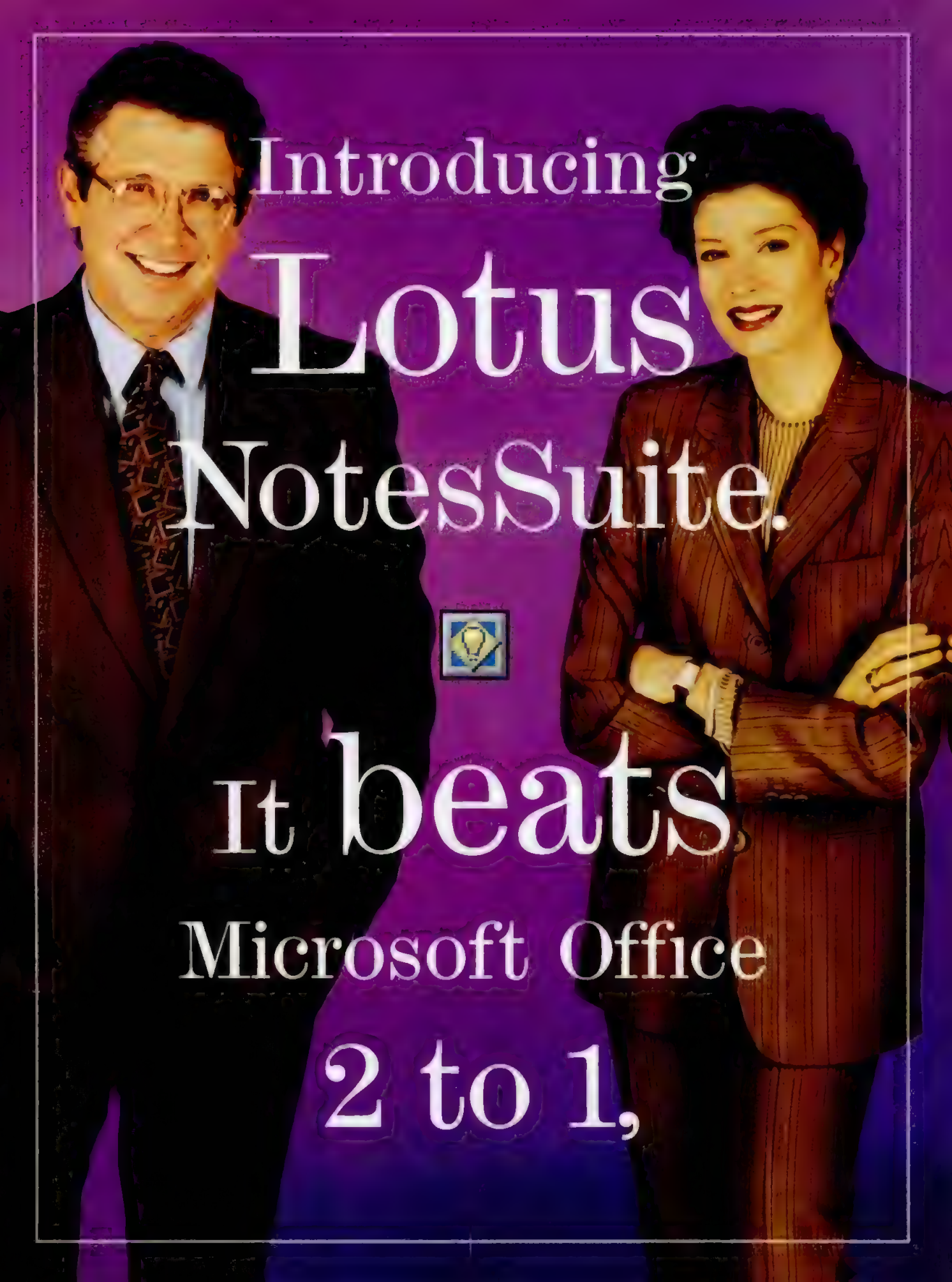
If Folio's strategy sounds complicated, it is. Putting corporate libraries on-line may take time, and in the interim, much of the information marketplace's content will come from on-line print publications. This puts Folio in direct competition with experienced players including Dow Jones, GENie, Information Access, and the commercial on-line services. It also puts Folio in competition with Notes, which is widely used to make corporate libraries electronic. Folio's strategy, however, may have two major advantages over other models for publishing on-line.

For one, Folio's graphical front-end tools are much more advanced than much of what is in use on-line today, and key players such as Novell and PowerSoft are working to make them more powerful. For example, Dow Jones allows you to scour business

Information Marketplace could be the sheer amount of content already in place. Reed Elsevier's Lexis-Nexis legal/business database is now Folio's sister company and will put all its documents on-line in InfoApp format. All of Reed Elsevier's publishing operations, including Cahnners', will too. The Copyright Clearance Center, which handles electronic copyright issues for 5,000 existing corporate publishers, will put all its electronic documents on-line in InfoApp format. And Folio has several thousand existing publishers of its Infobases.

Even if Folio is slow to get corporations to publish InfoApps and Infobases, the volume of existing content is considerable. According to Dow Jones, graphical front ends to compete with Folio's are in the works. Dow Jones is also working to make its Personal Journal interface, a Windows front end for searching *The Wall Street Journal*, into a graphical front end for all of its business information. The company expects to extend the Personal Journal interface later this year to all Dow Jones content, which includes 1,800 business publications. Information Access offers its Business Database+ service, which includes several thousand on-line magazines.

—Sebastian Rupley



Introducing Lotus NotesSuite.



It beats
Microsoft Office
2 to 1,

A group of 10 people, five men and five women, dressed in professional business attire. They are arranged in two rows, with five people standing in the back and five seated or standing slightly lower in the front. The background is a solid blue color.

Not to mention
10 to 1,

A group of 27 people, a mix of men and women, dressed in professional business attire. They are arranged in three rows, with the top row having 9 people, the middle row having 9 people, and the bottom row having 9 people. The background is a solid blue color.

27 to 1 and

A large, dense crowd of approximately 1282 people, mostly men and women, dressed in a variety of casual and semi-formal clothing. They are packed closely together, filling the entire frame. The background is a solid blue color.

1282 to 1.



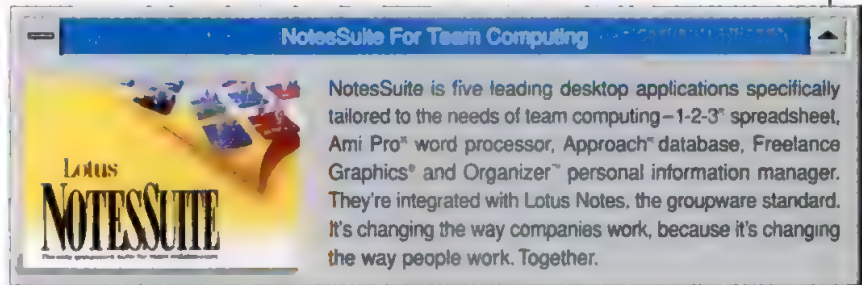
We have nothing against Microsoft® Office. And, if you're an individual who works alone, then you probably have nothing against it either.

However (and it's a big however), if you think the most productive way of working is by communicating, collaborating and sharing information with other people, you need the only business solution created to make teams more productive.

INTRODUCING LOTUS® NOTESSUITE,™ the powerful new combination of SmartSuite,® our five leading business software applications for the desktop, integrated with Lotus Notes,® the groupware standard that helps everyone communicate across the enterprise and around the world. The applications in NotesSuite are optimized for the computing needs of teams whether it be a team of two, of 1282, or even more.

WITH THE TEAM COMPUTING BENEFITS OF NOTESSUITE YOU WILL FULLY REALIZE THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR PEOPLE. Everyone, at every level, will be a contributor, a

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*In Canada call 1-800-GO-LOTUS. †\$299 per user license for Lotus NotesSuite Desktop. Minimum purchase of fifty licenses required. ††Source: "Lotus Notes: Agent of Change," International Data Corporation, 1994. The World Wide Web address: <http://www.lotus.com>. ©1995 Lotus Development Corporation, 55 Cambridge Parkway, Cambridge, MA 02142. All rights reserved. Lotus, Working Together, Lotus Notes, SmartSuite, 1-2-3, Ami Pro, Approach and Freelance Graphics are registered trademarks and NotesSuite, Organizer and Notes/FX are trademarks of Lotus Development Corporation. Microsoft is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation.

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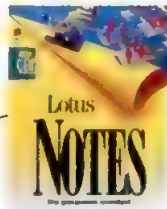
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First Looks

HANDS-ON REVIEWS OF NEW SHIPPING PRODUCTS

APPLICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Delphi Combines Visual Programming With Fast Native-Code Compiler

By Neil Rubenking

Borland, with the introduction of its Delphi applications development environment, returns to its roots of Pascal programming—but with a big difference. The latest arrival in the component-based visual programming field, Delphi is an alternative to Microsoft's Visual Basic or PowerSoft's PowerBuilder that lets you quickly design prototype Windows applications and provides all the resources you'll need to create the full-fledged production version.

Delphi comes in two flavors: Desktop Edition (\$499) and Client/Server Edition (\$1,999).

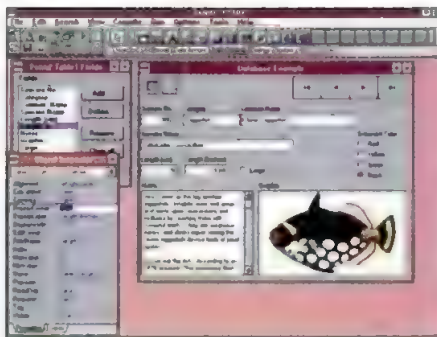
The desktop product contains a full complement of components and includes support for local database access and reporting. The Client/Server program adds

tools for advanced network database development and an interface for supervising team development of a project. Delphi's database support is fully scalable,

so switching from local to client/server can be as simple as changing a database alias.

DEEP-DOWN PASCAL

Programming in Delphi starts with form design. There, you place components on a form, setting properties (like color, caption, and font), and adding functionality



LIVE FISH: Delphi allows the use of live data at design time, which is immensely helpful.

by attaching program code to events (such as OnClick, OnMouseDown, and OnChange). Delphi then creates a code unit that defines an object corresponding to the form. The object comes complete with data fields for each component, and automatically builds a method header for each event handler you add.

The programming language below the surface of Delphi is a version of Borland's Object Pascal. Up to date in all ways, Delphi includes enhancements like a new object model, integrated debugging, built-in exception handling, and runtime type information. Compatibility with Borland Pascal 7 is maintained, though mixing old and new object models in the same program caused occasional problems.

The Delphi compiler rapidly generates native machine-code .EXE programs and provides access to almost every area of Win-

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VIDEO

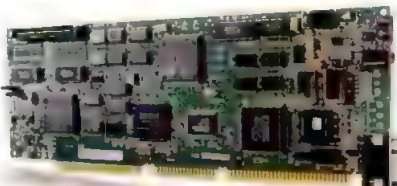
Two MPEG Decoders: Desktop Video Evolves to the Next Level

By Jan Ozer

Jazz Multimedia's Jakarta and Sigma Design's RealMagic RAVE prove that as hardware MPEG playback of video heads toward the mainstream PC user, all graphics and video cards are not created equal. The \$449 Jakarta aims high and delivers, setting new standards in video performance, expandability, and value. At \$489, RAVE is an able extension to Sigma's RealMagic line, providing stable performance and support for several MPEG formats.

Both cards represent a significant step forward for the state of hardware MPEG playback and offer an inexpensive glimpse at the

future of video, graphics, and multimedia. MPEG (Motion Pictures Experts Group) decompression is the predominant video compression technology today; it delivers 30 frame per second video, pro-



OVER AND UNDER: Based on overlay technology, the RAVE board combines graphics and video for display.

duces a native resolution of 352-by-240, and provides higher full-screen quality than most software compression technologies (for example, Indeo or Cinepak).

MPEG typically requires dedicated hardware to decode the image during playback. The Jakarta and RAVE boards, which combine graphics and video, offer different approaches to getting the video onto the screen.

THE GRAPHIC DETAILS

The Jakarta board, which is available in both PCI and VL-Bus configurations, uses a shared frame buffer architecture that integrates MPEG playback and graphics functions onto a single card. The design uses the Tseng Labs ET4000/W32p graphics engine, the Zoran ZR36100 MPEG decoder, a Viper video coprocessor, and 2MB of DRAM. This allows the Jakarta to handle true-color 24-bit MPEG playback at 800-by-600 resolution with a monitor refresh rate of 110 Hz, or 256 color depth at up to 1,280-by-1,024 resolution and 75 Hz.

In contrast to Jakarta's shared frame buffer, the RAVE uses an overlay design that keeps the MPEG and graphics components

separate until the MPEG data stream is color keyed over the VGA signal during display. The board uses the Trident Microsystems TGU19440AG 32-bit

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First Looks

Borland Delphi

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dows programming. The one exception is that you can't use Delphi to get into extremely low-level tasks such as writing VxDs (virtual device drivers).

What you can do is create DLLs, call any Windows API function, respond to any Windows message, and write Delphi components in Delphi. Any design element you see in Delphi is available for use in your own programs.

TWO-WAY TOOL

The program allows you to switch easily between visual and text programming. For example, if you cut a component from the form and paste it into the code editor, you'll get a text description of the component. We found that if we changed the properties of the component or even altered the component to a different type, and cut the text and pasted it back into the form, Delphi was able to automatically update the object.

Editing a Delphi form resource file as text is as simple as loading it into the program's code editor. Delphi handles the conversion.

Delphi components provide access to all of the standard Windows controls such as list boxes, memo boxes, and menus, plus a number of common but nonstandard controls such as spin buttons and outlines. Even the standard components get new abilities under Delphi. For example, many components, including the list box, memo box, and image components, can load and save their data in disk files.

Advanced components include bit-mapped buttons, speed buttons, two different varieties of tabbed notebook, two types of grid, and a media player component that plays sound files, movies, and CD audio with ease.

Delphi's DDE (Dynamic Data Exchange) compo-

nents simplify the often thorny issue of exchanging data via DDE, whether from the client or server side. The OLE-container component permits creation of OLE client applications. There's no built-in support for OLE server applications in Delphi at this time, however; expect full OLE

table's fields. For example, you can set a display mask for numbers, or set a field to read-only, and even define calculated fields.

For viewing and editing this data, Delphi supplies data-aware versions of most common components, including edit box, memo

comparable Visual Basic executable file.

Your investment in VBX controls isn't wasted if you switch to Delphi, because any VBX 1.0 control should work with Delphi. Of course, if your Delphi programs rely on VBX controls, you have to distribute the necessary VBX files with them.

In Delphi, the step from using components to writing components is evolutionary, not revolutionary. You don't have to learn how to program in C or C++, as you would if you wanted to write VBX controls. And your new component can inherit all the functionality of the existing component that comes closest to satisfying your needs.

GROUP DYNAMIC

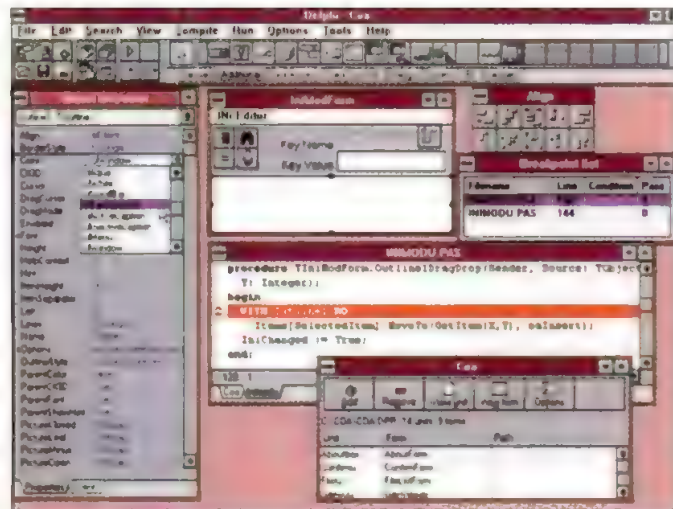
Delphi fits into a group environment, as well. The client/server version contains full work-group support, including the interface for Intersolv's PVCS Version Manager 5.1. You get the expected team programming features that track successive versions of a project, and a system that lets programmers check out a section of code for work, thus blocking others from changing it until it is checked back in. The result is the orderly development of an application regardless of whether 20 or 20 are writing it.

Currently, Delphi is based on a 16-bit compiler, but its programs are compatible with Microsoft's Windows 95 beta and Windows NT operating systems. A 32-bit version of Delphi is scheduled to appear after the release of Windows 95. Converting your Delphi programs to 32-bit should be simply a matter of recompiling them with the new version.

Whether you're a beginner at Windows programming or a long-time expert, Delphi has a lot to offer for start-to-finish development of applications.

Delphi. List price: Desktop Edition, \$495 (\$199.95 through May 31); Client/Server Edition, \$1,999. Requires: 6MB RAM, 30MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later, CD-ROM drive. Borland International, Scotts Valley, CA; 800-891-2223, 408-431-1000; fax, 800-408-0001.

Circle 434 on reader service card



PLACE AND RUN: Program design in Delphi involves placing components on forms, setting their properties, and writing code to respond to events.

support at the client and server levels in the next release of the package.

The database components are divided into two groups: data access components and data controls. The former are invisible components that represent databases, tables, SQL queries, reports, stored procedures, and so forth.

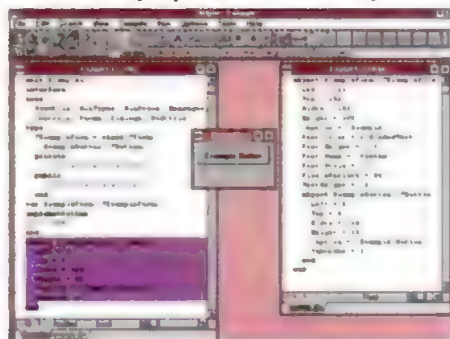
Creating a master/detail relationship between two tables doesn't require any program code, and you can work with live data at design time. Delphi's DataSet Designer lets you set properties individually for a

box, image, and grid. We were able to connect the program's data-aware grid and the database navigator to the same table component, which created an instant database viewer.

DELPHI VERSUS THE WORLD

Clearly Delphi is going up head-to-head with Microsoft's Visual Basic and PowerSoft's PowerBuilder, both of which have strong followings. Just what would it take to convince a loyal user of either of these applications environments to defect to Delphi?

A big inducement is Delphi's super-speedy compiler, which generates native machine code rather than interpreted code. The result is that Delphi programs should execute faster. And because the resulting programs don't depend on a runtime DLL or on other supporting files, they avoid such problems as the version incompatibilities that can arise with VBX components. On the other hand, since each Delphi program is self-contained and has all the code for the components it uses, a Delphi executable file will be substantially larger than a



CODE COPIER: On the right is the code for the window at center; on the left is the code produced by pasting it into the code editor.

MPEG Video Boards

Continued from page 37

graphics accelerator, C-Cube's CL450MPEG decoder, and Sigma's own WM7010A video scaler, and can display up to 128,000 colors in all video modes.

Available only for VL-Bus computers, the RAVE comes in

greater reach, because it is able to work with DCI-compliant software codecs—such as Indeo and Cinepak—in both Video for Windows and QuickTime for Windows formats. Thus, you can accurately scale video to full screen with little performance or appearance degradation. RAVE's scaling hardware, by contrast, works only with MPEG files.

In terms of MPEG compatibility, however, RAVE can claim the advantage. Where Jakarta plays only White Book Video CD files with the .MPG extension, RAVE is compatible with White Book, Green Book (CD-i), and

Karaoke and Video CD files with the .DAT extension. As PC-based MPEG support grows, we expect that many popular CD-i and Karaoke titles will be re-released in MPEG format, making this difference less relevant.

Of the two video boards, the Jakarta was slightly easier to install and get running. The board

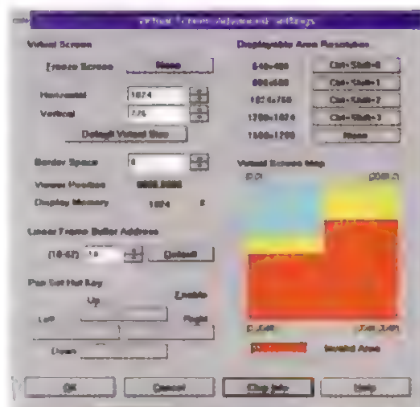
Unlike the RAVE, the Jakarta board offers two intriguing expansion options for desktop television-watching or playing TV-based video games (like those from Sega and Nintendo). Jazz also offers Projector, for VGA to NTSC conversion.

Two playback programs are included with the Jakarta board: Jazz Studio, which controls input/output from Jakarta and expansion sources; and Jazz View, a simple video-playback program. While both programs offer attractive and useful utilities, neither offered a timer or slider bar to gauge progress through the clip, which was disconcerting.

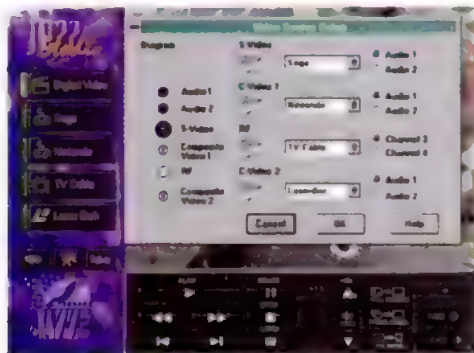
Jakarta's drivers are MCI compatible and accessible via Media Player and OLE. Jazz includes DOS power-management utilities and VESA and AutoCAD drivers. Microstation, OS/2, and Windows NT drivers are available on Jazz's 24-hour BBS.

RAVE REVIEWS FOR RAVE

For installation, Sigma's RAVE required an interrupt, a DMA



VIRTUAL WORKSPACE: RAVE's extensive software includes a virtual desktop.



CHOICES, CHOICES: The Jakarta offers video on a wide variety of playback platforms.

both 1 MB and 2MB DRAM configurations; a PCI version will be released by the time you read this. The 2MB board produces color depths and resolutions similar to those of the Jakarta but at lower scan rates: 56 Hz at 800-by-600 (24-bit operation) and 60 Hz at 1,280-by-1,024 (256 colors). Some annoying flicker was noticeable at the higher resolutions.

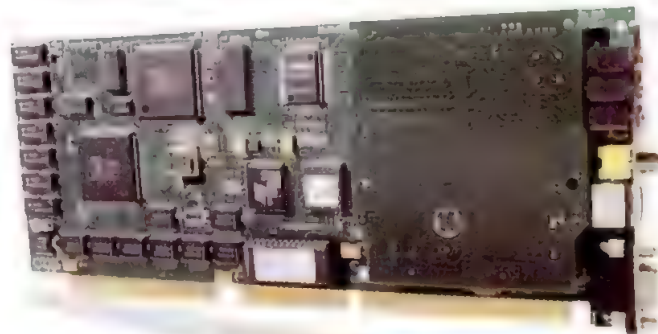
Head to head, the Jakarta bested the RAVE in our PC graphics tests, but the differences were marginal at best. Based on 32-bit architecture, neither board will challenge 64-bit or 128-bit cards in pure graphics performance, especially at higher video resolutions. Both are more than adequate for everyday word processing use, spreadsheet use, and the like; both put video on the desktop.

OUT TO THE VIDEO

MPEG playback quality of these two boards was roughly comparable at MPEG's native 352-by-240 resolution. During full-screen playback, Tseng's Viper accelerator/scaler hardware on the Jazz Jakarta system set itself apart from the RAVE board. The Jakarta produced clear, smooth video irrespective of resolution or aspect ratio. Next to the Jakarta, the RAVE's video often looked pixelated and mottled.

The Jakarta board also has

SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE: Using a shared frame buffer, the Jakarta board produces excellent video playback.



requires only one interrupt, but it must be interrupt number 9, regardless of what may already be using this interrupt. Jakarta's AnyView graphics utilities package, which is licensed from Binar Graphics, offers an impressive array of creature comforts such as on-the-fly mode switching, color and pixel calibration, a display power management system, a virtual desktop, and mode switching.

channel, and an I/O port, but the Windows-based installation program did the dirty work in minutes. Graphics controls were minimal, but included a virtual desktop with extensive customization capabilities.

RAVE offers two display programs: a dedicated Demo-CD diagnostic player for testing video operation, and the RealMagic CD-Station for more general use.

Both are polished, second-generation programs with advanced features like multiple video queuing, progress bar and frame counter, and single-frame screen capture. RAVE's DOS programs offer simple MPEG playback in a variety of video modes. Drivers are available for AutoCAD, Windows NT, and an array of DOS programs including Lotus 1-2-3, Word Perfect, Microsoft Word, and GEM Desktop.

Unfortunately, the RAVE board does not provide drivers for OS/2. But where Jakarta offered little out-of-the-box pizzazz, RAVE includes a veritable cornucopia of MPEG CD-ROM titles, including disks of Elvis Costello and INXS.

Both products are polished and impressive. In terms of instant gratification and slightly more functional playback software, the Sigma RAVE steals the show. But the Jazz Jakarta produces higher-quality full-screen MPEG, with greater support—as well as integrated expansion into video capture, VGA to NTSC encoding, and TV video games. It also offers greater overall functionality and performance. Your choice depends on how far you want to go with video on your desktop. **Jakarta.** List price: \$449. Requires: PC with VLB or PCI slot. Jazz Multimedia Inc., Santa Clara, CA, 408-727-8900; fax, 408-727-9092. Circle 429 on reader service card **RealMagic RAVE VLB.** List price: \$489. Requires: PC with VLB slot. Sigma Designs Inc., Fremont, CA; 800-845-8060, 510-770-0100; fax, 510-770-2640. Circle 430 on reader service card

PORTABLE PCs

Toshiba's Satellite Pro T2150CDT Goes into Orbit with a CD-ROM

By Lance Ulanoff

Taking multimedia on the road used to mean struggling with a suitcase-size luggable PC and hoping that hernias were still covered under your medical plan. The recent mini-explosion of multimedia-ready notebooks has made it so that you can start worrying more about your pocketbook than your back. Enter Toshiba's CD-ROM-equipped Satellite Pro T2150CDT, with an estimated street price under \$5,000 and a list of features and performance that could make a multimedia desktop PC blush.

Built around a 75-MHz DX4 processor, the T2150CDT comes complete with a 500MB hard disk, 8MB RAM, a Toshiba double-speed CD-ROM drive, 16-bit SoundBlaster Pro-compatible audio, and a pair of Type II

PCMCIA sockets. All this multimedia prowess is crisply displayed on the unit's 10.4-inch active-matrix color display—thanks in part to a C&T 655DGX-VL/ISA graphics accelerator chip backed by 1MB DRAM. If you can live with the somewhat dimmer dual-scan color display, the T2150CDS model sells for under \$4,000.

The double-speed CD-ROM drive is hidden neatly in the right side of the unit. Press a button and the CD tray slides out. Our only worry here is that the entire CD unit, including the delicate laser eye, is exposed whenever you change CDs.

To date, no one has figured out how to build in both a CD-ROM drive and a 3.5-inch floppy disk drive while maintaining a reasonable form factor. Toshiba moves the state of the art along a little

with the 7 pound 6 ounce T2150CDT; the floppy drive adds another 11 ounces to the travel weight. The system includes the power adapter inside the unit.

The T2150CDT's performance was above average on most of our benchmark tests, producing an impressive 56.6 score on our Winstone 95 application suite—20



PASS ME A CD: The Satellite Pro T2150CDT makes on-the-road multimedia a reality.

percent higher than the average score turned in by our last roundup of notebooks. No less impressive was its 3-hour-plus score on our WinDrain battery

test, which measures battery life under worst-case conditions. However, that value may decrease as CD-ROM drive usage is increased. Happily, the T2150CDT can charge its nickel hydride batteries in 2 hours.

Among the small world of notebooks with CD-ROM drives, the \$5,000 T2150CDT is lighter than the Panasonic V41 and less expensive than the IBM ThinkPad 755CD (First Looks, December 6, 1994), but lacks a 75-MHz Pentium processor option. The Toshiba Satellite Pro T2150CDT—with its impressive list of features—provides ground-breaking value for those who can't fit their work into a 3.5 inch floppy disk drive.

Satellite Pro T2150CDT. Estimated street price: With 8MB RAM, 500MB hard disk, 10.4-inch active-matrix display, under \$5,000. Toshiba America Information Systems Inc., Irvine CA; 800-334-3445, 714-583-3000; fax-back, 714-583-3800.

Circle 432 on reader service card

PDA's

Sharp Picks Up the PDA Pieces with Zaurus

By Jonathan K. Matzkin

Sharp's \$749 Zaurus ZR-5000 personal digital assistant attempts to build on the success of the company's Wizard organizer line while studiously avoiding the major mistakes

where the K stands for keyboard. Since the Zaurus's keyboard (which is identical to that of the Wizard OZ-9600) allows for efficient—if somewhat cramped—data entry, Sharp wisely steers clear of any attempt to decipher handwriting.

As with high-end Wizard systems, a pen does double duty as a pointing device and an input stylus for writing notes and drawing on the touch-sensitive, non-backlit LCD screen. We found that the pen-screen combination works well for jotting notes and makes for a better mouse substitute than many of the built-in pointing devices on notebooks. The downside is that the stylus is easy to lose.

At 6.7 by 3.9 by 1.0 inches (HWD), the dimensions of the Zaurus are close to those of the Wizard OZ-9600, which allows the Zaurus to slip easily into a purse or jacket pocket. The Zaurus weighs in at 13.6 ounces, about the weight of the typical

notebook's power adapter. The system uses two AA batteries; they can provide several weeks of heavy use.

The Zaurus goes beyond the Wizard line with a new proprietary 16-bit processor, 1MB of RAM (750K of which is available for applications), and a new graphics-based operating environment. While the Wizards must use Sharp's proprietary add-on cards, the Zaurus is equipped with a Type II PCMCIA slot. A \$100 snap-on modem (featuring 2,400-bit-per-second data transmission and 9,600-bit-per-second send-only fax capability) leaves the card slot free for another device.

Built-in software for the Zaurus focuses on personal organizer and communications duties. The word processor features drag-and-drop text editing, which really shows off the pen's usefulness. Files from different Zaurus applications can be associated in graphical folders that

allow work to be organized by project or subject.

The Zaurus is fine for sending simple faxes, and it handles e-mail well. Much of the software, including the word processor and notetaker, allow direct faxing via either the snap-on or PCMCIA modem.

The Zaurus currently supports IrDA-compliant infrared wireless file transfers and printing. Sharp is currently working on software that will allow a PC to function as a workgroup communications server for small Zaurus workgroups. It is also teaming up with Motorola to provide support for that company's NewsCard Wireless Data Receiver.

Aimed at mobile professionals who don't want to lug around a notebook but need to remain connected, the Zaurus will have to prove that it has overcome much that was lacking in early PDAs. **Sharp Zaurus ZR-5000.** List price: With 1MB RAM, \$749; data/fax modem, \$100. Sharp Electronics Corp., Mahwah, NJ; 800-237-4277, 201-529-8200; fax, 201-529-8919.

Circle 433 on reader service card



PALMTOP: Sharp's Zaurus is more capable than personal organizers and smaller than current PDAs.

made by the Apple Newton and other first-generation PDAs. While the Zaurus doesn't have handwriting recognition, it is smaller and lighter than traditional PDAs—and more powerful than current organizers.

Sharp calls the Zaurus a KPDA,

New Close-Up Offers Fastest Remote Windows Speed

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Now Close-Up, two-time winner of PC Magazine "Editors' Choice" award for remote communications software, has a brand new version that lets you view & control other PCs by modem — just as if you were there!

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— PC Magazine, July 1994

Why Is Close-Up So Fast?

Close-Up learns as it works. It uses AI (Artificial Intelligence) to compress all Windows video function calls. That's why Close-Up does so well in Windows Benchmark tests (see WinBench 95 chart).

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WinBench™ 95 Ver 1.0 by Ziff-Davis Labs Tests Remote Windows™ Speed

The graph on the right shows the speed of the three leading remote control programs when transferring Windows screens. As you can see, Close-Up handles more pixels faster, meaning you spend less time waiting for Windows screens to transfer.

WinBench scores (average of 10 runs):

Close-Up	209,270
pcAnywhere	122,600
Reachout	101,900

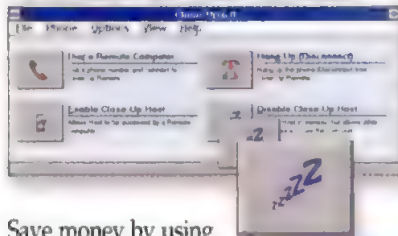
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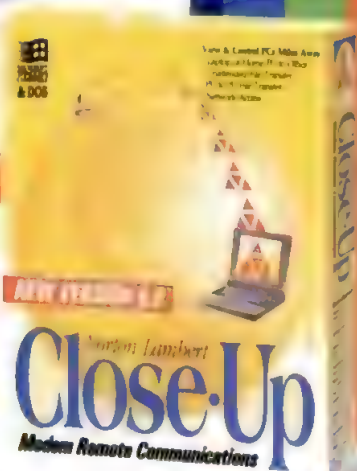
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We invite you to reproduce this test. Modems: Hayes OPTIMA 28K V.F.C. Computer: (Host) Gateway, (Remote) Micron, Pentium 90MHz, 32MB RAM, 128KB RAM cache, 500MB HD, IDE controller, no hardware disk cache. Video: (Host) STB Lightspeed 1MB VRAM, (Remote) Diamond Stealth 64 2MB VRAM. 800 x 600 pixels, 16 colors. SuperVGA.DRV 11/1/93, 7" Hz. MS-DOS 6.22, SMARTDRV 2MB cache. WinBench 95 is available on ZiffNet via CompuServe. All products are shipping versions. Test performed without verification by Ziff. WinBench trademark of Ziff-Davis Publishing Co. Windows trademark of Microsoft Corp. 90 day money-back guarantee if purchased directly from Norton-Lambert. Offer expires 9/30/95. All prices in US Dollars. Prices exclude shipping.

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February 1989
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Close-Up 3.0A



October 1988
Close-Up 3.0A

VIDEO

Diamond Stealth 64 Stretches Video for the Desktop

By Jonathan Hill

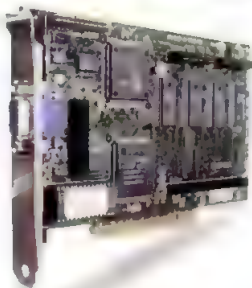
Diamond Multimedia Systems redefines how video will be viewed on the desktop PC with its new \$389 Stealth 64 Pro Video VRAM card. The combination graphics and video accelerator can stretch full-motion video clips to full-screen without causing any dropped frames or synchronization errors in the process.

The key to the Stealth 64 Pro Video's high power and low price is the S3 Vision968 accelerator chip, which builds on the success of its predecessor—the Vision964 chip—by adding video-specific support for hardware scaling, color-space conversion, and filtering. The Stealth's driver is DCI-compliant, so requests for these services are handled by the Vision968 chip, freeing up your PC's processor for more pressing tasks.

The card's settings are customized using Diamond's InControl software. There is a long list of supported monitors, as well as the ability to choose virtual and actual display size, and color depth. InControl also allows you to adjust the system fonts and cursor color, access the current audio settings, and adjust video acceleration parameters.

We tested a PCI-based 2MB VRAM Stealth 64 Pro Video board in a Hewlett-Packard Vectra XU 5/90C equipped with a Pentium/90 CPU, 16MB of memory, and a 540MB hard disk. In 16-bit color mode at 1,024-by-768 resolution, the card produced a Graphics WinMark 95 score of 14.6 million pixels per second; at 800-by-600 resolution in 24-bit (true-color) mode, the card received a score of 13 million pixels per second. These scores are nearly indistinguishable from the top-ranked cards in our latest Graphics Accelerator roundup ("Rush Power," December 6, 1994).

Video acceleration was equally impressive. The Stealth 64 Pro Video card was able to stretch our 30-frame-per-second .AVI



HOT CLIPS: The Stealth 64 Pro Video board can expand video clips to full screen.

clips to four times the original size without any affect on the sys-

MULTIMEDIA

InterActive Pulls You into Multimedia Authoring

By Eryn Brown

As if collecting the right audio, video, and image files for a multimedia application weren't hard enough, putting them all together can be as complicated as untying the Gordian Knot. HSC Software's \$295 InterActive 2.0 uses the same icon-based authoring technology as in AimTech's IconAuthor, but puts the emphasis on ease of use.

Getting started is simple. Just drag and drop icons for the application's major operations from the Icon Library to the Application Window. A flowchart represents the application under construction. Once the structure is in place, clicking on any of the icons opens up a Content Editor dialog box, where you can do everything from placing multimedia files to labeling the icons as they'll appear in the Application Window.

The icons themselves represent a wide range of functions. Some, like the Beep and Pause icons, are straightforward. Others—particularly composite icons such as Menu—represent multistep processes that are more difficult to master. The MCI-AVI icon, for example, is actually a series of icons that supply the MCI commands needed to play and control an .AVI file.

Once you get the hang of work-

ing with the composite icons, mixing and matching the component parts yields the precise sequence of events that you want. The product includes a royalty-free runtime module and IA Copy, an applet for distributing your application.

Creating attractive content with Interactive's editing mod-

Motion Video Player daughter-card option, which provides hardware MPEG playback and a composite video in port. The same MPEG accelerator card with 2MB of RAM costs \$449.

The Stealth 64 Pro Video VRAM card provides top-rank graphics performance and adds video playback to your desktop for virtually no charge, providing a taste of the power that integrated multimedia will bring to the desktop.

Stealth 64 Pro Video VRAM. List price: With 2MB VRAM, \$389; with 4MB VRAM, \$559. Diamond Multimedia Systems Inc., San Jose, CA; 800-380-0030, 408-325-7000; fax, 408-325-7070.

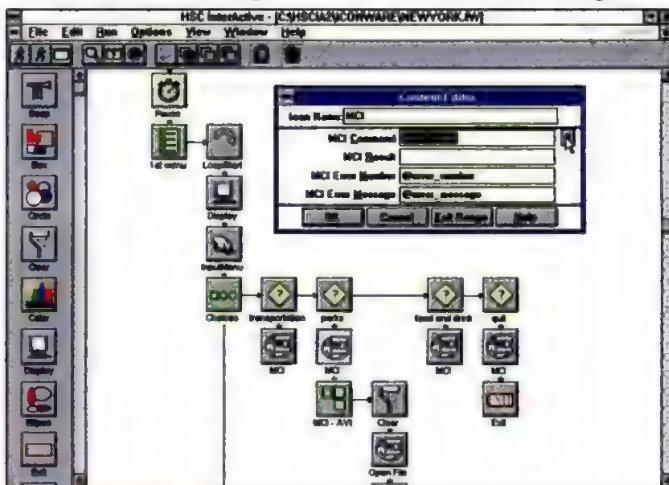
Circle 401 on readers service card

ing with the composite icons, mixing and matching the component parts yields the precise sequence of events that you want. The product includes a royalty-free runtime module and IA Copy, an applet for distributing your application.

Creating attractive content with Interactive's editing mod-

scalable fonts, and there's only one level of undo. IconAnimate, the animation editor, only allows you to draw point-to-point paths.

InterActive is no substitute for an industrial-quality program like IconAuthor, but it offers an inexpensive means to ease your way into multimedia authoring.



GO WITH THE FLOW: Using an accessible flowchart metaphor, Interactive clearly maps out an application's progression.

ules, despite attempts to mask its complexity, is no easy feat. The graphics module, for instance, is not object-oriented, so once you add text it's permanent. Text can be moved by drawing a frame to select it, but this can be awkward. The module does not support

InterActive 2.0. List price: \$295. Requires: 4MB RAM, 4MB hard disk space, CD-ROM drive, 8-bit sound card or better, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. HSC Software, Carpinteria, CA; 805-566-6200; fax 805-566-6385.

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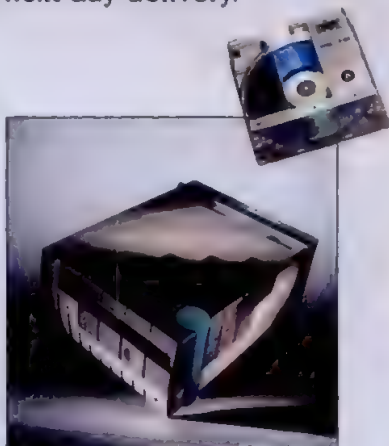
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FLOWCHARTING

ABC FlowCharter 4.0: Everything for Novices to Corporate Developers

By J.W. Olsen

ABC FlowCharter 4.0 (\$495) hits a home run. It provides something for every Windows user who needs to create flowcharts and other diagrams, while adding robust programming potential and automation of data to and from external sources. A \$99.95 upgrade from Micrografx and competing products makes the move to FlowCharter 4.0 easy.

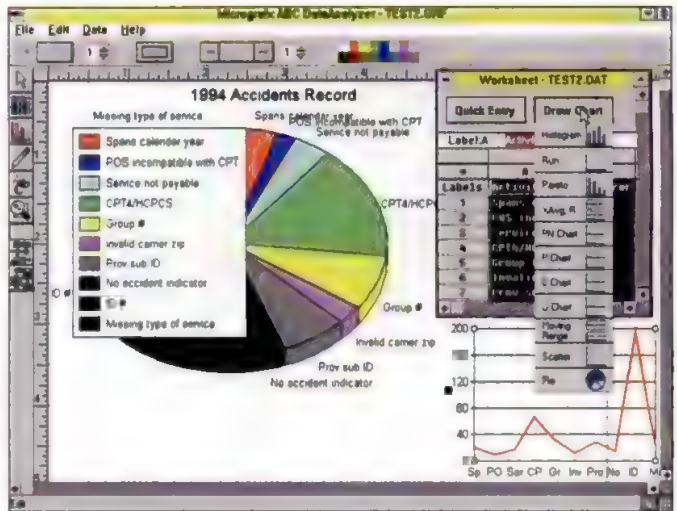
FlowCharter 4.0 contains four modules and nominally replaces

ate. Others can view, print, and annotate your charts, but they can't create new ones. Micrografx includes its entry-level SnapGraphics program for those who need to create graphics occasionally but don't need the power of the FlowCharter module. SnapGraphics competes more directly with products such as ShapeWare Corp.'s Visio and Corel Corp.'s CorelFlow. Switching between modules (except Viewer) is as easy as clicking toolbar icons, but

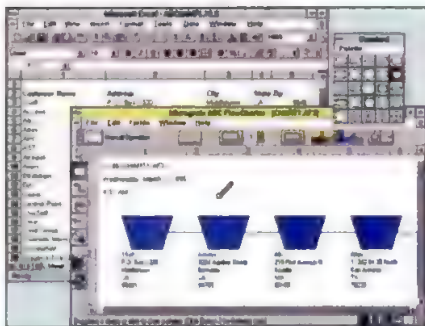
each module has its own unique interface, so expect to spend some time learning each one.

You can install the FlowCharter module from the included floppy or CD-ROM disks. The CD-ROM contains fully functional, 30-day trial copies of Micrografx's Picture Publisher and Designer, plus 273 TrueType fonts.

FlowCharter is at or near the head of the diagramming class with 25 object palettes; drag-and-drop convenience; user-friendly control of connector lines; embedded objects such as spreadsheet cells, animation, and sound; and pop-up notes. The package also lets users assign data to objects and lines with nine automated calculations such as sum,



DATA OUT: The DataAnalyzer module creates a variety of complex and attractive graphs of your data.



DATA IN: OLE 2.0 automation programming lets external data flow into FlowCharter 4.0.

ABC FlowCharter 3.0 (First Looks, April 26, 1994). ABC ToolKit (First Looks, August 1994) is the product's real predecessor, however. The four pieces of the ABC puzzle are: FlowCharter, DataAnalyzer, Viewer, and SnapGraphics. FlowCharter and DataAnalyzer were formerly marketed as ABC ToolKit.

The FlowCharter module is essentially an update of FlowCharter 3.0's charting software. It includes ground-breaking data association to shapes and lines, and totaling capabilities that increase the scope of the program. The DataAnalyzer module includes analysis and charting tools that transform data into a variety of diagrams, including Pareto diagrams, pie charts, scatter charts, and histograms. For those streamlining workflow, DataAnalyzer makes preparing organizational and process-flow diagrams easier.

FlowCharter 4.0's Viewer module allows the free distribution of any of the charts you cre-

median, and maximum or minimum values. FlowCharter is now MAPI e-mail enabled.

The big step forward for FlowCharter and DataAnalyzer is that it now lets users move data transparently between modules. While ToolKit acted as an OLE 2.0 client and server, FlowCharter 4.0 offers a robust applications development environment for Visual Basic and Visual C++. (See the sidebar, "The ABCs of OLE.")

Because it has 350 reusable OLE objects, you can easily automate FlowCharter functions, access external applications and data, and exploit .VBX triggers to respond to user events within diagrams. Although these programming extensions can turn an ordinary flowchart into an interactive adventure, using them can be a handful for the inexperienced

programmer. We expect it will be used primarily as a corporate development resource.

While greatly extending its appeal among power users, FlowCharter 4.0 is reasonably inviting to occasional users as well. Best of all, it provides a path to grow with users' needs and abilities. By bundling SnapGraphics, Micrografx addresses the needs of casual users who might otherwise choose Visio or CorelFlow. Visio may remain the easiest-to-use product on the market (by trading power for drag-and-drop convenience), but FlowCharter 4.0 has the edge in programmability.

FlowCharter 4.0 doesn't have all the diagram options found with Axum or the ability to breathe life into a static chart by providing the process simulation that Scitor Corp.'s ProcessCharter offers, but what the package does do, it does very well. The only major problem is data import, where users are restricted to .WMF or EasyFlow (HavenTree Software) formats.

FlowCharter 4.0 found a way to be all things to all users. Power and ease of use, now coupled with remarkable automation extensibility, make it the top choice for creating business charts.

ABC FlowCharter 4.0. List price: \$495. **Requires:** 4MB RAM, 21MB hard disk space, CD-ROM for some functionality. **Micrografx Inc., Richardson, TX; 800-676-3110, 214-234-1769; fax, 800-994-6475.**

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The ABCs of OLE

Mastering ABC FlowCharter 4.0's ground-breaking automation and event-triggering features requires time and training. You'll find what you need to take advantage of these powerful capabilities in the 500-page *ABC OLE Automation Programmer's Guide* (sold separately by Micrografx for \$29.95).

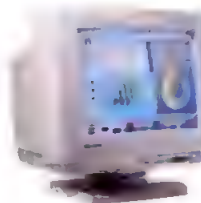
You can develop for FlowCharter in Visual C++ 1.5 with its MFC library, but the book's tutorial and reference sections focus entirely on Visual Basic 3.0. Techniques of C++ implementation are orphaned in a five-page appendix, so you'll need a solid background in Visual Basic and C++.

Neither FlowCharter's programming extensions nor the guide are meant for casual users, but corporate developers will find everything they need to exploit FlowCharter's automation functionality.—JWO



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TRANSLATION SOFTWARE

Transcend: Something's Still Lost in the Translation

By Edward Mendelson

Intergraph's Windows-based Transcend 1.0 program brings the dream of automated translation a step closer to reality, although not quite close enough to let you discard your bilingual dictionaries or replace human translators. The software, which has its

French, Spanish, and English texts, the translated output was generally clear, even if the grammar, meaning, and diction were occasionally off the mark. Unfortunately, each document we translated also included a significant portion of mistranslated passages that were rendered incom-

don't know the languages involved.

Each language-direction module uses a core dictionary that you can't edit. However, any number of custom dictionaries can be created by adding words that aren't in the core dictionary. During translating, you can use only one custom dictionary at a time, although future versions will let you use more than one. Entries in a custom dictionary override those in the core, so you can change the definition or gender of a word to make your translations reflect specialized text (such as in technical or medical material).

Creating or modifying a custom dictionary is time-consuming. You start by setting the program to scan your input files for items it doesn't recognize. You can edit the resulting word list in Notepad before incorporating the words into the dictionary. Whether or not you edit the list, the program will display each of the words in turn, and you decide which ones to include.

The next step is to type in a definition and laboriously use drop-down lists to specify the part of speech and other grammatical features of the word, such as whether a noun is common or ab-

ther the input or output text within the program; you see only the original and the translation in your word processor. Source texts for translation can be in ASCII, .RTF, or WordPerfect 5.1 formats, or you can use supplied WordPerfect for Windows or Word for Windows macros to work with text that you are editing on-screen in either of those word processors.

An option of special interest to international programmers lets you input and output text in the .RTF variant used for Windows help files. Registered users will be sent additional filters for Ami Pro, FrameMaker, QuarkXPress, and other formats as they become available.

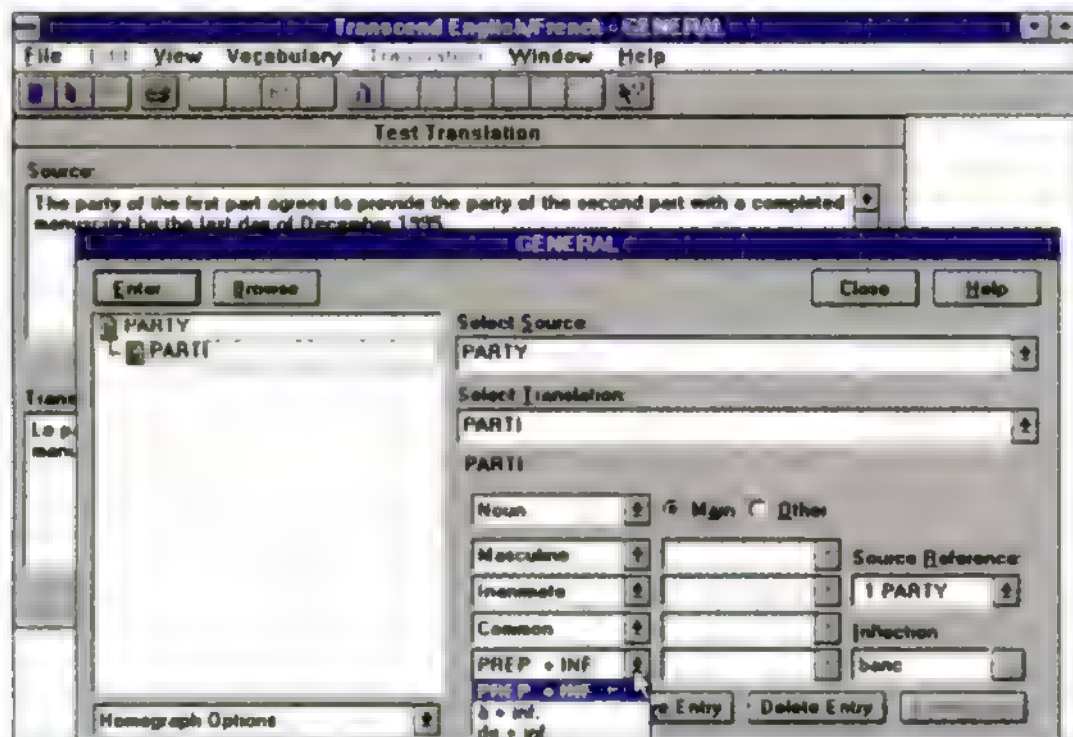
32-BIT REQUIRED

Transcend is optimized for Windows NT, and requires the Win32s extensions (included in the package) if you want to run it under Windows 3.x. Don't even try running it with less than 8MB of RAM. On our Pentium/90 test system with 32MB of RAM, the program ran without a hitch under Windows NT. We did encounter a problem when we tried to run Transcend on a Windows for Workgroups PC: It never got past the opening screen. Intergraph was unable to reproduce the bug, but acknowledged a similar problem from another user.

Compared with Globalink's PowerTranslator and MicroTac's Language Assistant series, Transcend is faster, makes fewer mis-translation errors, and can give the user a reasonable idea of the content of a French or Spanish letter or report. What Transcend misses are the nuances and subtleties of the languages it deals with, so you should have anything it produces checked before acting on the basis of what the program tells you.

Transcend 1.0. List price: \$495 for each translation direction. Requires: 8MB RAM, 15MB hard disk space for each translation module, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later with Win32s extensions, or Windows NT. Intergraph Corp., Huntsville AL; 800-222-9242, 205-730-9832; fax, 205-730-9835.

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PARTS: Transcend's dictionary-modification dialog box lets you specify parts of speech for added words and phrases.

roots as a Unix program included with Intergraph workstations, translates at high speed with impressive accuracy, but still introduces unwanted errors and requires human intervention to get the best results.

You pay \$495 for each supported language direction—in other words, to go back and forth between English and Spanish costs \$990 for both the English-to-Spanish and Spanish-to-English modules. Intergraph has completed modules for translations between English and either French or Spanish, and—continuing with its emphasis on European languages—will have modules for German, Italian, and Portuguese out by the summer.

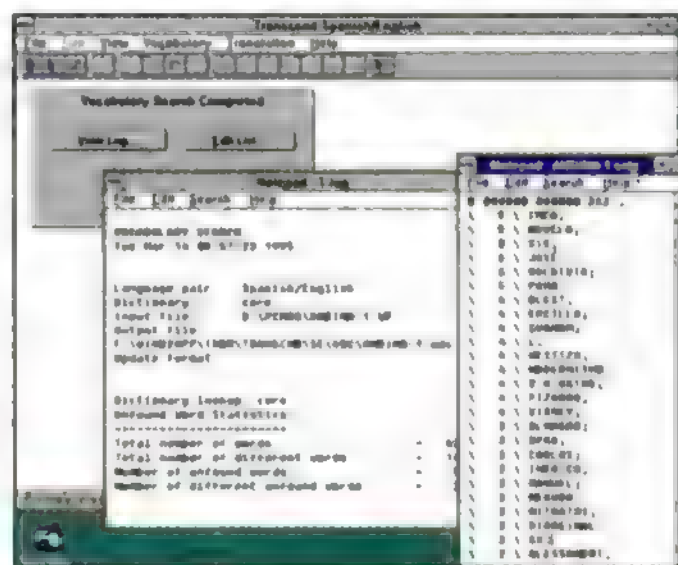
FAST AND DIRTY

Transcend typically translates at a rate of about 5,000 words per minute—notably faster than its PC-based competition, which include packages such as Globalink's PowerTranslator and MicroTac's Language Assistant Series. In tests with idiomatic

prehensible to native speakers of the output language.

For example, a Spanish sentence that means "It would have been, had it not been for the conquest of Peru," was translated to: "It would be it without went not by the conquest of Peru." In addition, the program misinterpreted the Ecuadorian city Quito as the first-person verb, "I remove." And Transcend often got hopelessly confused by conjunctions, so that it translated a "from . . . to" phrase as if it meant "among . . . and."

You can fix many of these problems if you already know both the source and target languages and if you're willing to spend some time customizing the program's extensive dictionary. As with all translation packages, you'll get reliable results from Transcend only if it is used to save time by pretranslating material, not because you



UNKNOWNs: Transcend scans input files for words it does not recognize.

stract and whether it refers to a place, person, group, or other category. This dialog box can be exhausting to use because it requires heavy use of the mouse and is lacking in even rudimentary keyboard shortcuts.

Transcend doesn't display ei-

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Personal Computer World, December 1994
(United Kingdom)

"OS/2 Warp...brings advantages which give it a significant technical lead..."

The European, October 14, 1994
(Europe)

"[OS/2] Warp is the natural upgrade for OS/2 for Windows™ users as it will run the latest versions of Microsoft's Windows software."

The Courier Mail, October 18, 1994
(Australia)

"Fast, dependable, able to work better with fewer resources...a viable candidate for standard operating software for the multiplatform PCs of the future."

PC Windows, September 1994
(Italy)

"With Windows 95 delayed...this is IBM's window of opportunity. OS/2 has always been technologically superior..."

Kevin Linfield, Computing Now!, December 1994
(Canada)

"IBM's OS/2 has quietly evolved from a DOS replacement to a corporate-class, scalable family of desktop and server solutions."

PC Week, November 14, 1994
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"...no operating system product to date has offered as much out-of-the-box value as OS/2 Warp."

InfoWorld, November 14, 1994
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Stan Miestkowski, BYTE Magazine,
November 1994
(USA)

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InfoCHANNEL, October 1994
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"OS/2 Warp will bring your system up to speed, hitting all cylinders by putting serious power under the hood."

Home Office Computing, February 1995
(USA)

"My personal favorite—perhaps the most useful productivity software available today—is IBM's superior operating system, OS/2."

FORTUNE, March 6, 1995
(USA)



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PORTFOLIO MANAGERS

MetaStock: A Good Bet, as Far as Charts Go

By Sebastian Rupley

MetaStock, a time-honored leader in DOS stock-market technical-analysis software, now has a much easier-to-use, more flexible Microsoft Windows version. It's no guarantee of profits, but the \$349 program from Equis International offers the sophistication that makes you feel like a financial pro while you're trying.

The product is much more than just a Windows make-over of MetaStock. It's object oriented, so that every object on screen (such as prices, moving averages, and

share-volume indicators) can be modified or moved with the mouse. For example, we were able to combine a price line and a trend line from separate screens into one consolidated chart.

While MetaStock for Windows will no doubt satisfy those inclined toward chart analysis, this product and others like it (most notably Windows on Wall Street) focus on stock price and ignore a company's balance sheet, earnings, and fundamental

data. Other products, such as Value Line's Value Screen III, Morningstar's Equities On Floppy, and Reuters Money Network offer fundamental analysis that allows screening of prospective companies based on price/earnings ratios and growth.

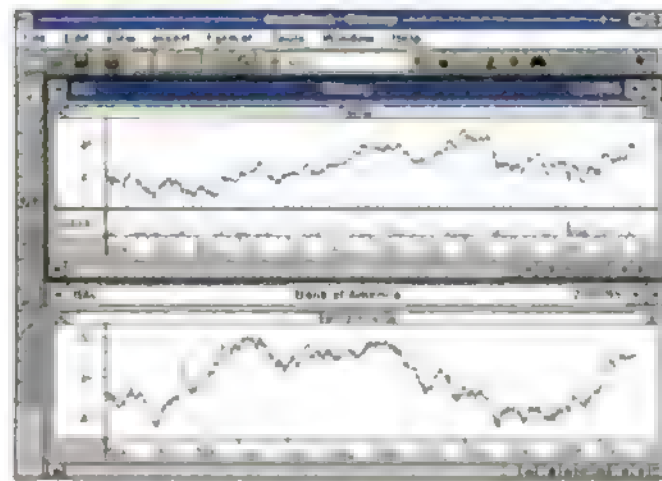
MetaStock is unique for its ability to back-test a strategy, the investment buff's version of Monday-morning quarterbacking. For example, we plotted Chrysler's stock price for the past year and then had MetaStock back-test an investment strategy called Negative Volume Index. The program sought out and annotated periods of down-trading volume that functioned as buy signals and generated a report with gains and losses of

this strategy. Two utilities add further to MetaStock's depth: OptionScope allows for "What If" options analysis and Explorer searches through securities data for measures such as rates of price change.

The included Windows CompuServe Downloader module is a functional but limited way to get stock quotes. We suggest you spend the extra \$49 for the module, which supports DBC Signal, Dial/Data, Dow Jones, MarketScan, and Telescan. MetaStock for Windows converts data from and exports data to ASCII, Microsoft Excel, Lotus 1-2-3, MetaStock for DOS, and Quattro

Pro file formats. Disappointingly, the program doesn't support OLE, which would facilitate chart-sharing with applications such as Microsoft Excel. On the other hand, MetaStock for Windows includes nice touches not found in most financial charting products, such as an accurate Print Preview mode.

Despite the program's much greater ease of use under Windows, technical terms such as Fibonacci arcs and Vega functions will continue to intimidate investing novices, making it more suit-



TRACK: MetaStock excels at preparing charts of stock performance.

able for financial whizzes.

MetaStock for Windows. List price: \$349. Requires: 4MB RAM, 10MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. Equis International Inc., Salt Lake City, UT; 800-882-3040, 801-265-8886; fax, 801-265-3999.

Circle 422 on reader service card

INTERNET

VocalTec: The Internet Phone Number?

By Tony Pompili

VocalTec's \$59 Internet Phone opens up your PC to an exciting new application for using the Internet as a telephone. Except for some ruffled feathers in the Internet community and audio quality inferior to what the telephone company routinely delivers, Internet Phone makes the connection.

Internet Phone is Windows software that works with your PC's sound system, to enable you to speak with any other Internet Phone user. Instead of paying the rates of AT&T, MCI, or another carrier for the long-distance call, you're charged for the less expensive Internet hourly access rate plus your local phone connection, regardless of where you call. For a 4-minute call from New York to San Francisco, for example, Internet Phone made the connection for \$.10, one-tenth the AT&T charge.

The key is Internet Phone's proprietary compression technique, which requires only a 7-kilobit-per-second (Kbps) bandwidth. Using Internet Phone is similar to using CompuServe CB, except it is vocal-, not character-, based. Keep in mind that it takes a bit more coordination to connect with your partner over the Internet than just picking up the phone.

Calling someone with Internet

Phone is similar to calling someone over early satellite connections because Internet Phone's connections are not full-duplex. During our evaluation of the product we experienced about a 1.1-second delay between the time we spoke and the time our partner heard us, as measured by the unit's software. To make the system work, we had

This product is based on IRC (Internet Relay Chat) servers and has upset several IRC operators. In testing we found several IRC servers either blocked Internet Phone access or dropped connections. VocalTec has set up its own IRC servers (irc.puver.com and iphone.vocaltec.com) and expects to have more on-line by the time you read this.

Internet Phone is an inexpensive way to send your voice over the Internet.



VITAL SIGNS: Internet Phone's interface shows the vital signs of your conversation, including who is speaking.

to slow conversation down a bit.

VocalTec has done a decent job of helping users cope with this staccato speaking pattern by including a status line that tells you when you can speak and when your partner is speaking. Oddly, it also shows when you're speaking.

Internet Phone. List price: \$59. Requires: 4MB RAM, 1.7MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. VocalTec Inc., Northvale, NJ; 201-768-9400; fax, 201-768-8893; World-Wide Web, <http://www.vocaltec.com>.

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FIRST LOOKS PLUS

From April 24 through 28, you can go on-line to download a demo or discuss MetaStock for Windows with Allan McNichol of Equis International Inc. and reviewer, Sebastian Rupley. Type GO EXEC at any CompuServe prompt.



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"The Pantera Pentium units' Winstone 95 performance was outstanding, each system leading its respective tier."

**- PC Magazine,
December 6, 1994**

"The Pantera is one hot performer.... It's a first-class machine from top to bottom."

**- Computer Life,
November 1994**

"ZEOS set the standard... The obvious choice among the group."

**- Computer Shopper,
August 1994**

"In this roundup of ultra-fast PCs, the ZEOS Pantera 90 offers the most bang for the buck."

- PC Magazine, September 27, 1994

"This is as good as it gets.... They don't come any faster."

- PC World, May 1994

"Measurably the best in its category.... the winner in price and performance was the Pantera 90."

**- PC/Computing,
February 1995**

"ZEOS Pantera rose above the crowd and posted the most impressive performance numbers."

**- Windows Sources,
August 1994**



Pentium-66
April 12, 1994
DX4-100
June 28, 1994



Pentium-60
April 1994
Pentium-90
August 1994



486DX2-66
January 1994
February 1994
March 1994
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March 1995
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DX4-100
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December 1994
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February 1995
April 1995
Pentium-66
June 1994
July 1994
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486DX2-66
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Package 1	Package 2	Package 3	Package 4
486DX2-50 \$1295	486DX2-50 \$1595	486DX2-50 \$2095	486DX2-50 \$2495
486DX2-66 \$1345	486DX2-66 <i>CNI</i> \$1645	486DX2-66 <i>CNI</i> \$2145	486DX2-66 \$2545
DX4-100 \$1545	DX4-100 \$1845	DX4-100 <i>CNI</i> \$2345	DX4-100 \$2745
Pentium-60 \$1645	Pentium-60 <i>CNI</i> \$1945	Pentium-60 \$2445	Pentium-60 \$2845
Pentium-75 \$1695	Pentium-75 <i>CNI</i> \$1995	Pentium-75 <i>CNI</i> \$2495	Pentium-75 \$2895
Pentium-90 \$1995	Pentium-90 \$2295	Pentium-90 <i>CNI</i> \$2795	Pentium-90 \$3195
Pentium-100 \$2195	Pentium-100 \$2495	Pentium-100 \$2995	Pentium-100 \$3395
Pentium-120 \$2595	Pentium-120 \$2895	Pentium-120 \$3395	Pentium-120 \$3795

- 4MB RAM
- 340MB local bus IDE hard drive with 120K cache
- 3.5" 1.44MB floppy disk drive
- **Diamond Stealth 64-bit** PCI local bus SVGA color graphics card with 1MB DRAM
- ZEOS 14" 1024 x 768 non-interlaced SVGA color monitor, .28mm dot pitch
- Six-bay desktop case with two cooling fans
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2, Windows for Workgroups 3.11

- 8MB RAM
- 528MB local bus IDE hard drive with 120K cache
- **4X CD-ROM** drive and 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive
- **Diamond Stealth 64-bit** PCI local bus SVGA color graphics card with 1MB DRAM
- ZEOS 14" 1024 x 768 non-interlaced SVGA color monitor, .28mm dot pitch
- Six-bay desktop case with two cooling fans
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2, Windows for Workgroups 3.11

- 16MB RAM
- **850MB** local bus IDE hard drive with 256K cache
- **4X CD-ROM** drive and 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive
- **Diamond Stealth 64-bit** PCI local bus SVGA color graphics card with 1MB DRAM
- **ZEOS 15"** 1024 x 768 non-interlaced SVGA color monitor, .28mm dot pitch
- Six-bay desktop case with two cooling fans
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2, Windows for Workgroups 3.11
- **Lotus SmartSuite**

- 24MB RAM
- 1GB local bus IDE hard drive with 256K cache
- **4X CD-ROM** drive and 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive
- **Diamond Stealth 64-bit** PCI local bus SVGA color graphics card with 1MB DRAM
- **ZEOS 15"** 1024 x 768 non-interlaced SVGA color monitor, .28mm dot pitch
- Six-bay desktop case with two cooling fans
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2, Windows for Workgroups 3.11
- **Lotus SmartSuite**

Included With Every ZEOS Panthera:

- Genuine Intel® Processor. ZIF socket for easy upgrading.
- Diamond Stealth PCI local bus color graphics card with 1MB DRAM, upgradable to 2MB DRAM.
- Flash BIOS.
- Two high-speed serial ports and one enhanced parallel port on the motherboard.
- Slots: Three PCI & 4 ISA (486), 3 PCI & 5 ISA (Pentium).
- ZEOS 101-key space-saving keyboard.
- 200 watt power supply with built-in surge suppressor. Switchable between 115/230V.
- FCC Certified Class B; UL Listed.
- Complete ZEOS Customer Satisfaction Package.

486 & DX4 Extras:

- RAM expandable to 128MB.
- EPA Energy Star compliant.

Pentium® 60 Extras:

- RAM expandable to 384MB.
- On-board Fast SCSI-2 option.

Pentium® 75, 90, 100 & 120 Extras:

- RAM expandable to 384MB.
- On-board PCI local bus Fast SCSI-2 and Ethernet LAN options.
- EPA Energy Star compliant (75, 90 & 100).

Pentium-120 Available Now!

Favorite Options

- 528MB to 1GB Hard Drive Upgrade**\$170
- 1MB to 2MB Video RAM Upgrade**.....\$59
- Diamond Stealth 64/PCI Video Card with 2MB VRAM**
- Fastest 64-bit accelerated video\$249
- Upgrade from a 14" to a 15" Monitor**
- ZEOS SVGA NI, 1024 x 768, flat screen\$95
- Upgrade from a 15" to a 17" Monitor**
- ZEOS SVGA NI, 1280 x 1024, flat screen\$295
- SCSI Controller Chip**
- For on-board SCSI. Includes drivers.....\$49

- Internal 14,000 bps V.32 bis Modem with 14,400 bps Send/Receive Fax**\$79
- Internal 28,800 bps V.34 bis Modem with 14,400 bps Send/Receive Fax**\$199
- Front Drive Bay PCMCIA SwapBox**
- Installs into 3.5" drive bay. 2 Type II, or 1 Type III and 1 Type II\$179
- ZNYX EtherAction® 32**
- 32-bit PCI Ethernet LAN adapter. Includes 10Base5, 10Base2 and 10BaseT connections\$199

- 350MB Internal Tape Backup**
- 170 to 340MB (with compression), includes backup software.....\$179
- Multimedia Upgrade**
- Sound card and stereo speakers\$128
- 10-Bay Vertical Case**.....\$95
- Lotus SmartSuite Upgrade**
- Five applications with online documentation.....\$299

Many other affordable upgrades and options available. Call for details!

Free Lotus SmartSuite!



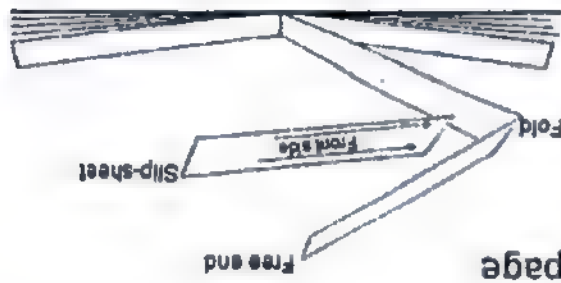
All Panthera packages include Microsoft DOS 6.2 and Windows for Workgroups 3.11. In addition, packages 3 and 4 include Lotus SmartSuite—1-2-3, Ami Pro, Freelance Graphics, Organizer and Approach—on CD-ROM with enhanced online documentation.

800-554-7172

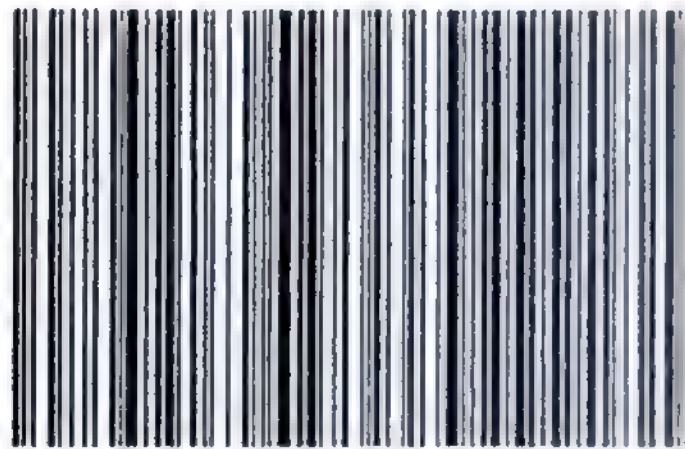
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Inc. GSA#G800894AGS5176



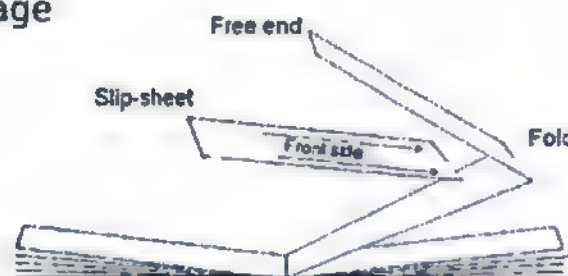
Folded edge of the page



GbsSlipSheet-001

Foldout slip-sheet

1. Open the foldout page
2. Insert this sheet with
 1. Front side touching the free page
 2. Arrow pointing to the fold
3. Slice the folded edge
4. Close the page and slip-sheet



1. Follow instructions on the other side

Inverted Back



Gbs5lipBack-001B

Back

1. Follow instructions on the other side

ZEOS Panthera™ A Vision That's Real.

There's no illusion here. Truth revealed: ZEOS Panthera is your No. 1 high-performance desktop system. Leading experts from top industry publications agree. Unparalleled in its field, the Panthera has continuously earned award after award—review after review.

Month after month, the ZEOS Panthera outranks all others in performance, reliability, and value. It's the biggest bang for your buck. As *PC Magazine* said: "Overall performance leaders... the Panthera line has a lot to offer—strong performance at a reasonable price, with excellent documentation."

Continuing with the ZEOS tradition of providing you with top performance, unwavering reliability and exceptional value, the ZEOS Panthera is giving you a new way of looking at the world.

Striking Performance



The Panthera, based on Intel's 486, DX4 and Pentium processors up to 120MHz, is breaking

record after record with its blazing performance and awesome power.

In *PC Magazine*'s December 1994 Pentium and 486 round-up, they gave top honors to the ZEOS Panthera: "Few product lines fared as well in our price/performance index as the ZEOS Panthera family. A major factor in the Panthera units' success was the outstanding Winstone 95 scores: The Pentium machines produced first-place scores in their respective tiers, and the ZEOS 486DX2-66 earned a top-five ranking among the entry-level systems."

PC World concurred: The Pentium-66 and Pentium-90 processor-based Panthera PCs were "the fastest system(s) ever tested... Mark a new high on the performance chart!"

What makes the Panthera the top performer—time after time? Superior engineering—starting with a ZEOS designed motherboard created specifically to take full advantage of the latest

technological advancements. The motherboard is loaded with exceptional features such as an on-board PCI Local Bus Enhanced IDE Controller and support for up to four IDE devices. For the fastest video performance, the Panthera includes a 64-bit Diamond Stealth PCI video card *standard*.

For the quickest data throughput, most Panthera packages also include a 4X CD-ROM drive.

As *Windows Sources* said: "The clear winner is the ZEOS Panthera. Its scores were the best across the board."

Real Value

The ZEOS Panthera is a first-rate example of ZEOS' commitment

to provide you with an excellent value on an award-winning machine. With all the extras, options, and 100% compatibility with all major operating systems—including Novell NetWare and OS/2—you can't go wrong.



And with our *Computers Now!* program, many of our most popular money-saving Panthera packages are ready to ship *the same day you order*. We also give you the option to custom-design a system to your exact computing needs.

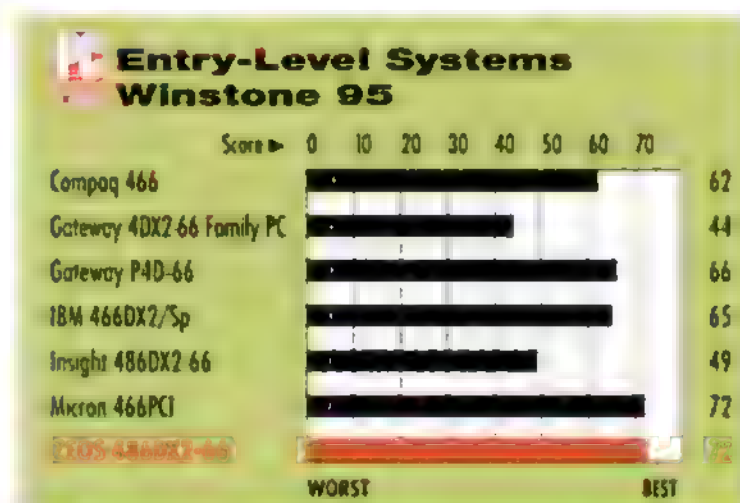
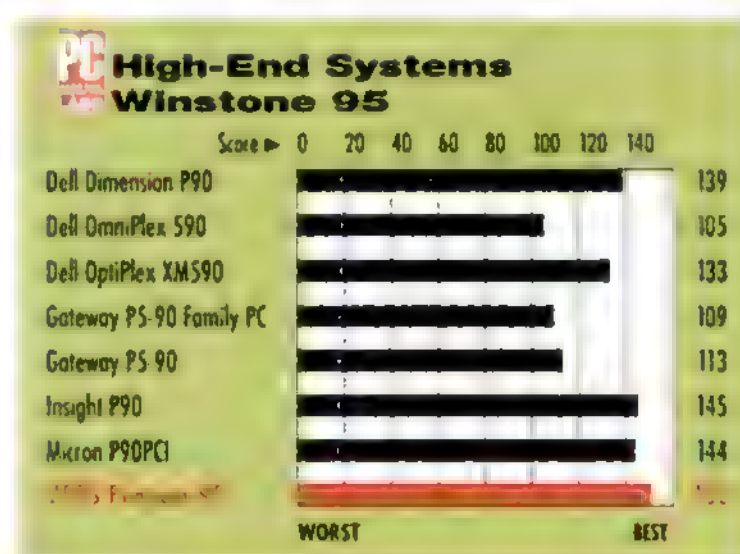
Either way, you can buy with confidence because of our on-going dedication to provide you with high-quality features and state-of-the-art technology at an affordable price. As *PC/Computing* said,

the Panthera "... is a deal you simply can't pass up."

And the value doesn't stop with your purchase. *PC World* said: "ZEOS's nonstop toll-free technical support schedule is unbeatable." *PC Magazine* agrees: ZEOS has won seven *PC Magazine* Readers' Choice for Service & Reliability awards. And we were the first to provide you with 24-hour toll-free technical support—every day.



Only one company gives you more features standard, incredible expandability, and supreme performance—all at an awesome price—ZEOS. And only one system gives you striking performance, unequalled reliability and the biggest bang for your buck—the ZEOS Panthera. To get the *Fastest Cat* around, call your ZEOS Systems Consultant today at 800-554-7172.



Reprinted from *PC Magazine*, December 6, 1994

ZEOS[®] Can Ship Today!

Our most popular packages can be shipped the day you call! Guaranteed!



486DX2-66 \$1645
Pentium-60 \$1945
Pentium-75 \$1995

Package #2:

- 8MB RAM
- 528MB local bus IDE hard drive
- 4X CD-ROM drive, 3.5" 1.44MB FDD
- Diamond Stealth 64-bit PCI local bus SVGA graphics card with 1MB DRAM
- 14" SVGA color monitor
- 6-bay desktop case
- MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups, Microsoft Mouse



Pentium-75 \$2395
Top Gun:

The above system modified to include:

- 256K SRAM cache
- Diamond Stealth 64-bit PCI local bus graphics card with 2MB VRAM
- 15" SVGA color monitor upgrade
- 14.4/14.4 send/receive fax modem
- Lotus SmartSuite



486DX2-66 \$1395
Package #2:

- 8MB RAM, 128K SRAM cache
- 528MB hard drive
- 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive
- VESA local bus SVGA color video
- 14" SVGA color monitor
- 4-bay desktop case
- MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups, Microsoft Mouse



Pentium-75 \$2595
Pentium-90 \$2895

Editors' Choice:

- 16MB RAM, 256K SRAM cache
- 528MB local bus IDE hard drive
- 4X CD-ROM drive, 3.5" 1.44MB FDD
- Diamond Stealth 64-bit PCI local bus graphics card with 2MB VRAM upgrade
- 15" SVGA color monitor
- 6-bay desktop case
- MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups, Microsoft Mouse
- Lotus SmartSuite



Pentium-75 \$2745
Pentium-90 \$3095
Pentium-100 \$3295

Hottest:

- The above system modified to include:
- 1GB local bus IDE hard drive
 - 6-bay desktop case (Pentium-75)
 - 10-bay vertical case (Pentium 90, 100)



DX4-100 \$2995
Package #3:

- 8MB RAM
- 350MB IDE hard drive
- External 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive
- DSTN color VGA 7.9" display
- Custom carrying case
- Extra battery
- MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups
- Lotus Organizer
- 7.8" x 10.2" x 1.7"; 3.9 lbs.



Pentium-75 \$3118
Pentium-90 \$3418

Best MM:

- 16MB RAM, 256K SRAM cache
- 528MB local bus IDE hard drive
- 4X CD-ROM drive, 3.5" 1.44MB FDD
- 16-bit sound card, stereo speakers
- Diamond Stealth 64-bit PCI local bus graphics card with 2MB VRAM upgrade
- 17" SVGA color monitor
- 10-bay vertical case
- MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups, Microsoft Mouse
- Lotus SmartSuite

Pentium-75 \$3495
Pentium-90 \$3795
Pentium-100 \$3995

Best MM Supreme:

- The above system modified to include:
- 24MB RAM
 - 1GB local bus IDE hard drive
 - High-power speakers w/ subwoofer



DX4-100 \$3195
Package #3:

- 8MB RAM
- 350MB IDE hard drive
- Internal 3.5" 1.44MB floppy drive
- Dual-scan color VGA 10.3" display
- Custom carrying case
- Extra battery
- MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups
- Lotus Organizer
- 8.9" x 11.7" x 1.9"; 6.3 lbs.

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1 Choose the ZEOS system package you want. (A sampling of our *Computers Now!*[®] — *CNI* — packages is shown at left.)

2 For same-day shipping, call ZEOS at 800-554-7172 before 1 p.m. Central Time, Monday-Friday.

3 Upon credit approval, we'll ship your system *the same day you order!*

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Hidden Image



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CIRCLE 155 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

WINDOWS SOFTWARE

PeopleScheduler Plus Adds Graphics to Schedules

By Ricardo Dobson

Do you plan schedules for a workgroup of telemarketers, retail workers, or service technicians? Do you track the number of hours worked and the breaks for full-time and part-time employees, some of whom work split shifts? Do you track vacation time for the people in your office? If you are currently doing any of these tasks by hand, Adaptiv Software's \$129 PeopleScheduler Plus may be just what you need to straighten out the schedule.

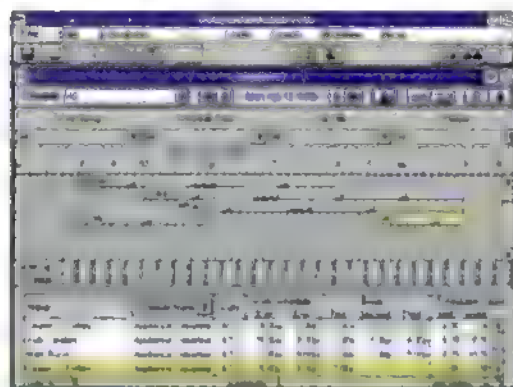
PeopleScheduler Plus distinguishes itself from nonspecialized products by allowing direct manipulation of schedules. It achieves this through a powerful visual interface designed for showing and managing workforce schedules. During installation, you input staff members, typical schedules, and other human resources information. Scheduling a worker for a day is as easy as selecting the day and clicking a button to enter the hours.

After you have set up a schedule, PeopleScheduler's unique TimeVisualizer display shows employee shifts for any period you choose. Employee work schedules appear as expandable timebars.

PeopleScheduler handles the timing of breaks with aplomb and can automatically schedule breaks so that the maximum number of employees remain on the job. You can show each worker's scheduled breaks on their individual timebar. You can also move, expand, or contract these timebars with your mouse to adjust the hours worked—breaks and all.

PeopleScheduler's Coach menu offers hand-holding help that walks you through typical scheduling tasks. Coaches provide on-screen step-by-step instructions, give feedback, and tell you what to do next.

Reporting is one of PeopleScheduler's strength. Two new TimeVisualizer chart options sort schedules by name or by time. If you want to generate payroll costs



SEEING TIME: PeopleScheduler timebars can expand.

or sales-by-employee reports, you can use PeopleScheduler's Ex-

port command with a special version of Concentric's R&R Report Writer (\$29) to merge schedule data with text data extracts from other company archives.

Adaptiv's PeopleScheduler Plus is a winner for several reasons. First, it competently addresses a typical business function. Second, it comes with all the niceties of Windows, including toolbars with tooltips, good drag-and-drop behavior, and edit-copy-paste functions. Third, the

manual serves as an excellent supplement to the on-line help by providing clear and comprehensive instructions on all PeopleScheduler functions. Internet-based support is also available through Adaptiv's World-Wide Web home page.

All told, PeopleScheduler does a good job of putting employees to work.

PeopleScheduler Plus. List price: \$129. Requires: 4MB RAM, 5MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. Adaptiv Software Corp., Irvine, CA; 800-598-1222, 714-789-7300; fax, 714-789-7320.

Circle 419 on reader service card.

APPLICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

WindowBASE 2.0 Supports More Formats but Remains Confusing

By Tony Pompili

Software Products International's \$199 WindowBASE 2.0, with its expanded support for XBase file formats, will appeal to individual and departmental developers needing one-stop access to databases built with Clipper, FoxPro, or dBASE. Though inexpensive, WindowBase offers a powerful array of database, query, input form, and reporting tools. The program's confusing interface, however, can make WindowBASE unwieldy to use and deploy.

WindowBASE was completely rewritten for Version 2.0, enabling developers to access popular XBase file formats as well as the program's own Open Access data-

base format. As is the case with products like FileMaker Pro or Lotus Approach, WindowBASE appeals to power users looking to create custom applications.

Developing databases and structures with WindowBASE involves little more than filling in simple tables and assigning data types and field lengths (much like with other products of this genre). You can join tables from the same database or from databases such as an Open Access and FoxPro by simply connecting common fields with the graphical linking tool.

Database data, which is stored separately from the database and table structures, can be displayed and edited in an efficient spread-

sheet format. WindowBASE's customized input and display forms use rich text and graphics. To reduce form-design time, you can use the Forms Assistant; this tool lets you create custom forms without manually drawing fields and labels.

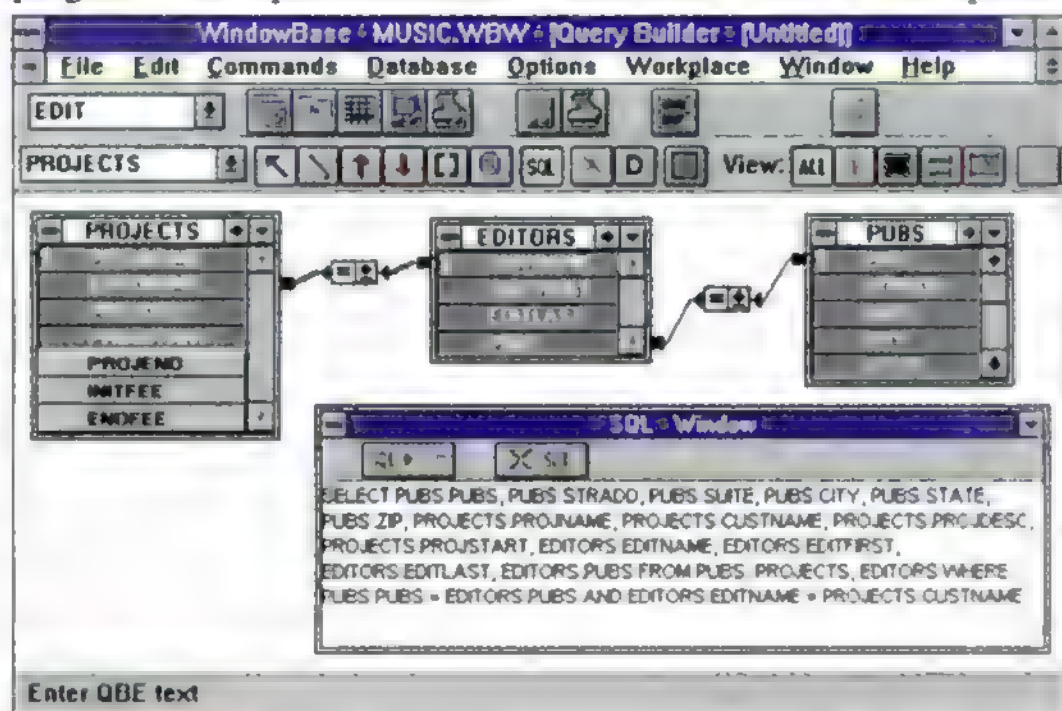
Where WindowBASE falters is in its often inconsistent interface and structure. The program makes it confusing for new users to comprehend how tables, forms, databases, and queries are associated with one another. In some cases, databases and connections share the same name. Navigation from project to project can be difficult, since you aren't sure what is where or how it's called. Similar products (such as Lotus Approach) conveniently list forms, databases, and queries in a single outline display.

Developers can assign record locking to WindowBASE applications for multi-user situations, but deployment to other users can be painful; database application code—including forms, structures, and queries—must be manually copied to each networked workstation. SPI plans to fix this problem with a forthcoming WindowBASE deployment application.

A powerful and inexpensive development tool, WindowBASE will be most useful to the experienced database developer.

WindowBASE 2.0. List price: \$199. Requires: 4MB RAM, 5MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. Software Products International Inc., San Diego, CA; 800-937-4774, 619-450-1526; fax, 619-450-1921.

Circle 421 on reader service card



PICK AN EDITOR: WindowBase lets you use SQL or a QBE tool to build database queries and full-scale applications.

COLOR SCANNERS

HP ScanJet 3c Picks Up Where the IIcx Leaves Off

By Alfred Poor

The HP ScanJet IIcx—the color scanner that won an Editors' Choice award in "Desktop Scanners: Color for All," February 7, 1995—has been put out to pasture. Taking its place is the HP ScanJet 3c, which is capable of higher resolution and greater color depth and includes a more complete package of software—but retains the IIcx's \$1,179 price tag.

The system's hardware is impressive and a step forward from the ScanJet IIcx. The ScanJet 3c is a 30-bit scanner with a 600-dot-per-inch engine that is capable of producing scans of up to 2,400 dpi through software enhancement. This results in a marked improvement over the 24-bit ScanJet IIcx, which could scan at 400 dpi and enhance an image to 1,600 dpi.

While the ScanJet 3c's emphasis is on reproducing color, it also works well with gray-scale images. The ScanJet 3c can capture 1,024 levels of gray (10-bit images), as compared with 256 levels for the ScanJet IIcx.

COMPLETE PACKAGE

There's more to the ScanJet 3c story than just hardware. HP throws in a complete bundle of powerful software, starting with CorelPhoto-Paint 5.0. This full-featured image editor supports OLE, so you can embed and link images in Microsoft Windows-based application files.

For OCR (optical character recognition), you get Calera's WordScan 3.1 for the PC or WordScan Plus 1.2 for the Macintosh platform. WordScan takes advantage of HP's AccuPage technology to increase both text-recognition accuracy and scan speed.

The package also includes HP's ScanJet Copy Utility, which can turn your scanner, computer, and printer into a color or monochrome photocopier depending on what type of printer you have. The software includes all the fea-

tures you'll need, from image scaling to the ability to produce multiple copies; it even has a scan-to-fax feature for sending scanned images directly to a fax modem.

Based on HP's DeskScan II Twain-compliant driver, the ScanJet 3c lets you scan directly into any application that supports the Twain standard. In addition to the expected controls for brightness, contrast, scaling, sharpening, and

most useful for efficiently producing several scans. While Automatic Find uses a preview scan to locate the image on the scanner bed, Automatic Type detects whether the image is black-and-white, gray scale, or color. The scanning software can also automatically halftone an image as it scans.

EASY LOCK

Like the ScanJet IIcx, the ScanJet 3c is easy to set up and get running. The scanner's carriage lock is a sliding plastic block, so you don't need any tools to lock or unlock it, and there are no nuts and bolts to lose; locking the carriage for shipping or storage is just as easy.

The scanner uses a SCSI interface, and you can connect it either to the ISA card that comes with the system or to any CAM (Common Access Method) or ASPI (Advanced SCSI Programming Interface) SCSI board you may already have installed in your computer.

The ScanJet 3c's software package includes a calibration routine for your monitor and printer. There is an on-screen routine for balancing the monitor settings, and the program can print out calibration targets on either black-and-white or color printers. These targets are then scanned to create custom calibration tables for those devices. During testing, we found this feature to be as sophisticated as it was easy to use, resulting in the saving of time and money by reducing trial-and-error printing, which adds up quickly with color printers.

Using default settings, the ScanJet 3c produced excellent images over a variety of samples we used. Colors were rich yet accurate, and subtle details came through even in deeply shadowed

areas. Happily, the ScanJet 3c didn't introduce annoying jagged lines to the scans that had straight edges.

As good as the scans were, the ScanJet 3c is also quick. A 5-by-7-inch image scanned at 200 dpi and full color depth took 46 seconds, which is roughly twice as fast as the scanner it replaces and is competitive with other 24- and 30-bit products on the market.

ADD-ONS

If you want to do more with the ScanJet 3c, you have two available options. The 50-page automatic document feeder (ADF) lists for \$559 and will come in handy if you intend to do a lot of archiving and character recognition work. There is also a transparency adapter that lists for \$759; it can scan images from 35-mm slides up to 8.5-by-11-inch overhead slides.

HP doesn't skimp on the support it provides for the ScanJet 3c, either. The company's Express Exchange Service will overnight a new scanner to you in the event of a failure during the first year (available only in the United States).

While the ScanJet 3c is slightly more expensive than Agfa's \$995 StudioScan II, it provides true 30-bit digital images at 600 dpi and includes a SCSI host adapter. The StudioScan II is a 24-bit scanner that uses 10-bit analog-to-digital converters to produce 400-dpi images, and does not include the adapter card. All told, the ScanJet 3c provides more scanner for the money.

The HP ScanJet 3c combines high resolution and 30-bit image scanning at a price that is comparable to several lower-resolution 24-bit scanners. If you thought that the ScanJet IIcx was a winner, wait until you get a look at the ScanJet 3c.

ScanJet 3c. List price: \$1,179. Requires: 4MB RAM (8MB recommended), 4MB hard disk space, available expansion slot for a CAM- or ASPI-compliant SCSI host adapter, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. Hewlett-Packard Co., Direct Marketing Organization, Santa Clara, CA; 800-722-6538, 208-396-2551.

Circle 426 on reader service card



POWER SCAN: The new HP ScanJet 3c can convert paper or transparencies into accurate 30-bit color images. Scans produced by the \$1,179 ScanJet 3c have rich yet accurate colors, faithfully reproduced skin tones, and sharp, clean edges.

other image enhancements, the driver includes several time-saving features.

We found two features to be

First Looks

SCANNERS

Personal Scanners from UMAX and Visioneer Get Smarter

By Alfred Poor

There are big flatbed scanners that can handle just about anything and small handheld scanners that are useful when you want to take a quick swipe at something in a book. In between is a new generation of desktop personal scanners that quickly transform paper into digitized images for faxing, optical character recognition (OCR), graphics, or archiving.

Though the \$495 UMAX PageOffice and \$399 Visioneer PaperPort 2.0 can both scan a page in a few seconds, they each offer a particular view of what a personal scanner should be, and the hardware and software needed to fulfill that goal. As a result, you will probably have a strong preference for one or the other.

UMAX PAGEOFFICE

The UMAX PageOffice (from UMAX Technologies) looks a little like a desktop ink jet printer, with its 10-sheet input tray sticking up in the back. Unlike any printer, however, it has two buttons labeled "Document" and

white) image at 300-dot-per-inch resolution, which is appropriate for OCR and document archiving. The Photo scan creates an 8-bit gray-scale (256 levels) image at 100 dpi.

Documents can be turned into editable images via the PageOffice's built-in OCR feature. Though you can adjust the settings, PageOffice was able by default to detect different blocks of text automatically (as in multiple-column layouts); it did occasionally misread some of the magazine pages we used as test images. The program was generally very accurate in the actual text conversion, but it did not preserve such formatting details as bold, italics, or point size.

Scanned images are stored on a desktop screen in PageOffice's bundled management program. This software lets you print the image, send it out through e-mail (if you have Lotus's cc:Mail or Microsoft Mail), or fax it (if you have a fax modem).

From the desktop, you can also drag and drop the image into any of six included applications; an

ager, and PageType allows you to add text to an image—an excellent way to fill out a faxed form.

The PageOffice is a SCSI device that comes with its own interface card. The Windows-based software installs quickly and easily; it loads automatically when you start Windows, so it is always ready to run whenever you drop a page into the scanner.

If variety and gray-scale graphics are essential to your work, the PageOffice package should be a welcome addition to your desk.

VISIONEER PAPERPORT

The Visioneer PaperPort 2.0 places the emphasis more on words than graphics. The system lacks a paper tray, so you must feed the sheets manually, one at a time. Instead of including document management as a separate function, all images are automatically placed in the program's filing system, which is a bit more sophisticated than the UMAX's Page-File system.

Instead of including proprietary applications, Visioneer expects you to use your existing Windows programs. The scanner works with all popular fax modem programs as well as a variety of graphics and word processing programs. Currently, the PaperPort meshes with 50 Windows applications; this number will grow. The program creates icons for any applications it supports.

You can drag and drop images onto any of these icons to send an image to the application. In our test, the program automatically installed Microsoft Word for Windows 6.0 and Windows

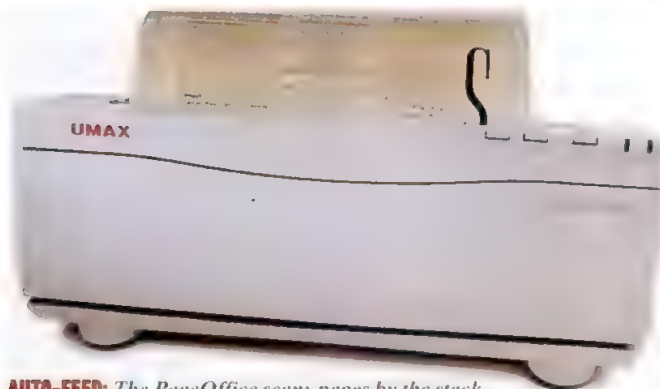
better (though still not perfectly), and preserve font size and formatting when bringing text into Word for Windows.

Graphics scans are less sophisticated with the PaperPort. Scans can be set for either 200 or 400 dpi but are limited to 1-bit (black-and-white) images. The software compensates for the lack of gray-scale support by dithering the image on the fly to create halftoned gray scales. Though sufficient for occasional use, this is still not the same as true gray-scale support. One other drawback for graphics scanning is that you need to work with the full page: You can't crop the image until after you have taken it into a graphics-editing program.

The PaperPort uses a simple serial connection, and the soft-



ONE AT A TIME: Since the PaperPort lacks a paper tray, you must feed pages manually.



AUTO-FEED: The PageOffice scans pages by the stack.

ware is designed so that it doesn't use hardware interrupts; you won't have a problem even if you already have two serial devices installed. As long as you have an available serial port, the PaperPort's installation, setup, and use is a breeze.

Despite its lack of a paper tray, the Visioneer PaperPort is a good desktop device for turning paper into pixels.

UMAX PageOffice. List price: \$495. Requires: 4MB RAM, 20MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. UMAX Technologies Inc., Fremont, CA; 800-562-0311 510-651-8883; fax

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A TOSHIBA, COMPAQ

See how the screen
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against the one in a
Compaq LTE Elite
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will easily outlast a
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With the SmartPoint trackstick your
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The 910N is over half
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Standard memory, you ask? The 910N
features 8MB RAM, compared to the 4MB
RAM in the IBM ThinkPad 755C.

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Lithium ion battery:
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Weight: 6.1 lbs.

AST.
COMPUTER

ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

First Accounting Keeps Bookkeeping Simple

By Kathy Yakal

Peachtree Software's new \$49 First Accounting package trims the fat off of overgrown entry-level accounting programs. First Accounting looks and works like the popular Peachtree Accounting for Windows (PAW), but lacks some of its high-end functionality in such vital areas as inventory, data analysis, and information management.

Even without the added functionality, First Accounting is still quite a bargain. It offers more sheer bookkeeping power for the dollar than any other Windows accounting program. You can import Quicken data or start from scratch, choosing from 60 sample Charts of Accounts.

The Setup Checklist is especially helpful for novices to get started. It lists every step required to get your company's books established after you've chosen your options (batch- or real-time posting, cash or accrual accounting) and defined your fiscal year.

In addition, Peachtree's Smart Guides offer tips on using the current screen. And conventions such as file-folder tabs, module "maps," look-up lists, and Smart Data Entry (automatic fill-in on fields such as Customer I.D.) further simplify operation.

Predefined formats for database records, such as for customers and vendors, offer a generous number of data fields, as well as half a dozen custom fields. You can enter your records up front or on the fly, as you need them. Unfortunately, ASCII data import is not accommodated in First Accounting.

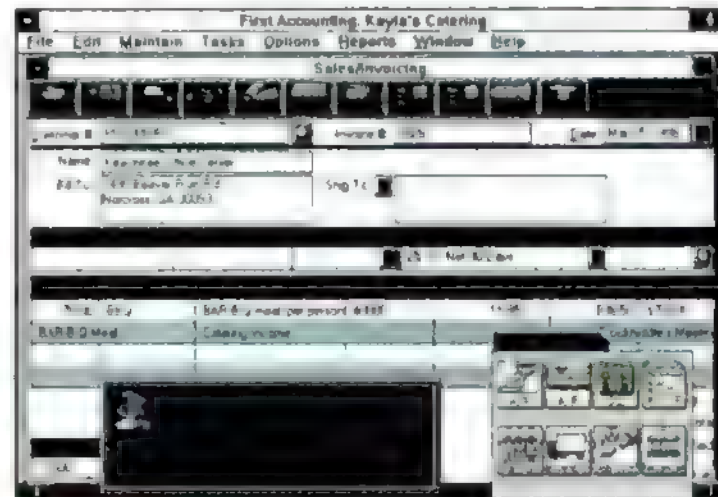
Like PAW, First Accounting contains the standard modules required to capably track your company's finances: General Ledger, Accounts Payable and Receivable, and Payroll. The program lacks a full-blown inventory module, but it lets you record inventory items and even does some rudimentary job costing.

Data-entry screens (customers and vendors, invoice forms, and the like) are almost as detailed as

PAW's, but lack elements like finance charges and references to Action Items (a useful contact-management feature in PAW). The predefined reports included should be more than sufficient for the needs of a small business, however. You can customize them by setting filters (ranges, dates, and such) and changing their fonts. Forms such as invoices, statements, checks, and 1099s can be customized and printed.

Since Peachtree Accounting for Windows and First Accounting use the same database structure, those users who outgrow

First Accounting can easily move up to the company's flagship program.



FIRST AID: Smart Guides and module maps are two of First Accounting's help features.

Peachtree Software's idea—to soften the power of PAW but carry the friendly tone of its interface over to an entry-level product—was a good one. It provides a good first step for those small-business owners who are still using pencil and paper to do their

company's books. **First Accounting.** List price: \$49. Requires: 4MB RAM, 12MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. Peachtree Software, Norcross, GA; 800-228-0068, 404-564-5800; fax, 404-564-5888.

Circle 420 on reader service card

WINDOWS SOFTWARE

FedEx Ship Lets You Track Packages from Your Desktop

By David Haskin

FedEx Ship is for those who absolutely, positively, *must* control the overnight shipping process from their desktop PC. This free, simple-to-use Windows program (a Macintosh version is being developed) automates and simplifies most aspects of shipping with Federal Express, from printing air bills to locating lost packages.

FedEx Ship's main interface is a simple button bar. Clicking on one icon displays the address book window, in which you add

Besides selecting a recipient or group, you determine matters such as the type of package you are shipping, billing procedures, and special handling instructions. When you finish, the program dials Federal Express's mainframe-based Cosmos shipping and tracking system and logs in your packages. At this time, you can also dispatch a courier.

FedEx Ship then prints shipping labels for your packages and, optionally, a receipt. You'll need a laser printer, however, because FedEx Ship prints a bar code on the shipping label.

For some, the biggest advantage of using FedEx Ship is that it lets you track packages on your own. You do this by selecting the items you want to trace from a log of your previous shipping activity or by entering a wayward package's tracking number.

After selecting the packages to track, FedEx Ship dials Cosmos, downloads the information, and displays a window showing the packages' progress at each step of the journey—from initial pick up to delivery. While it is not as fast as a phone call to FedEx, the Ship

program provides accurate and timely information.

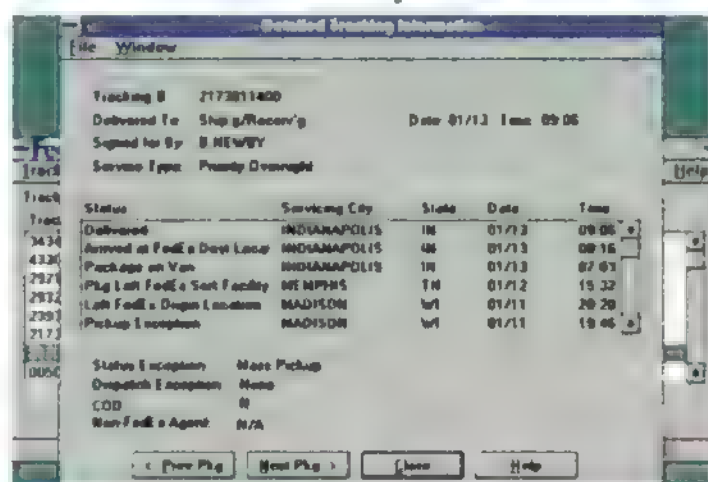
FedEx Ship is simple and useful, but it isn't a total solution. It can print a summary of your shipping activity but has no report generation capabilities; you must export information in comma-delimited format and use another application for reports. This limitation means that many customers will still need Federal Express's more powerful Powership turnkey hardware and software system.

The initial release we reviewed also had some first-version jitters, each of which has since been fixed. Specifically, searching the activity log on the basis of date when the log was empty caused a general protection fault and corrupted FedEx Ship's database index files.

By unifying shipping and tracking functions with an easy-to-use interface, FedEx Ship makes sending and tracing packages with Federal Express a no-brainer. And you certainly can't beat the program's price.

FedEx Ship. List price: No charge. Requires: 4MB RAM, 4MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later, laser printer. Federal Express, Memphis, TN; 800-463-3339.

Circle 403 on reader service card



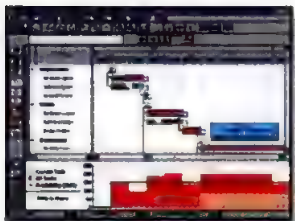
WHERE'S MY PACKAGE? FedEx Ship lets you get up-to-the-minute reports on a package's status.

recipients for shipping. Besides adding the expected name, address, and account number for individuals, you can also create recipient groups for quickly sending several packages at once. The program then walks you through the shipping process.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT IS CHALLENGING ENOUGH. YOUR SOFTWARE SHOULDN'T BE.



Project Scheduler® 6 for Windows™ is the easy way to keep in touch with all your projects. But you'll still have to wear your pager.



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conflicts and resource allocation problems.

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Also new is a second-generation ODBC interface for selectively

sharing project data with other ODBC-compliant applications.

Project Scheduler's Advanced Resource Tracking Spreadsheet (ARTS)™ offers an easy, yet powerful, way to model and evaluate resource costs and usage on a period-by-period basis. Even quick comparisons of various "what-if" scenarios is a breeze with multiple undo/redos.

So quick, before your beeper goes off again, find out why Computer Shopper said, "if you want one project management package to choose for the long haul, choose Scitor's Project Scheduler 6."



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WINDOWS SOFTWARE

What's in a Name, PC Style

By Theresa W. Carey

Have you got a brand new product you're trying to name? The Namestormers' \$495 NamePro 1.01 provides a set of databases and search criteria that can help you create unique monikers and check them for vulgarity and trademark infringement with the aid of your computer.

NamePro comes packaged with a database of nearly 31,000 names and parts of names that you can sort, combine, and play around with until you've got a name that you're ready to put through the trademark-checking process. Once you've chosen a name you like, you can check to see whether it has already been trademarked or search to see whether the name means anything obscene in any of several European languages.

To test the program, we decided to name some aliens and their planet for a science fiction universe. We chose several connotations (High Tech, New/Innovative, Smart/Intelligent, and Big/Large Size), restricted the length of the name to 14 characters, and then let NamePro loose to do its search.

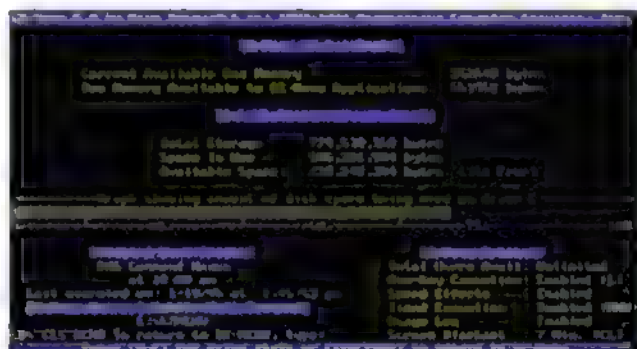
In the end, the program came up with nearly 1,500 possibilities, and from that list we selected eight likely candidates. None of them checked out as "vulgar," and only two had possible trademark conflicts. Perhaps you'll even see some Avitects from the planet Ultipor II turn up in a future episode.

UTILITIES

DOS Menus for Life in the Network Age

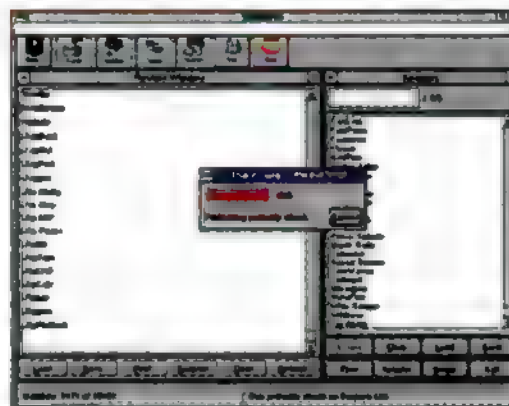
By David Haskin

If you rely on tried-and-true DOS applications, then EZ-Menu 6.0 may be your ticket to a simpler life. This venerable DOS menuing program is full of



DECISIONS, DECISIONS: EZ-Menu displays its choices in a series of menus.

new features which increase simplicity and security for both end users and system administrators.



You will want to run NamePro on a PC with a fast processor, or else be prepared to sit around waiting while it crunches through all the database entries.

FOUR LETTER WORDS: NamePro's profanity checker helps you avoid embarrassment.

At \$495, the NamePro program is less expensive than hiring a marketing consultant, and it can be fun, as well.

NamePro 1.01 for Windows. List Price: \$495. Requires: 4MB RAM, 15MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. The Namestormers, Dallas, TX; 214-350-6214; fax, 214-350-7617.

Circle 418 on reader service card

You can launch as many as 120 DOS and Windows programs, tasks, and submenus from each menu. EZ-Menu also includes automation for launching tasks like backups and virus scans. Security options now include password protection for virtually every facet of the program. EZ-Menu will track usage activity of menu items and the overall PC in separate log files, and it can create usage reports with ease.

EZ-Menu's installation routine scans for programs and automatically adds them to menus. One problem we encountered, though, was that au-

tomatic menu creation faltered when applications weren't stored directly off the root directory. Also lacking is task switching, which enables users to jump among open DOS applications.

Laudably complete and well refined, EZ-Menu enables system administrators to create consistent and easily supported environments, and provides DOS users with a straightforward way of launching programs and tasks. **EZ-Menu, Version 6.0.** List Price: \$69.95. Requires: 256K RAM, 1MB hard disk space, DOS 3.0 or later. Progressive Computer Services Inc., Metairie, LA; 800-628-1131, 504-831-9717.

Circle 416 on reader service card

INTERNET UTILITY

InfoSeek Searches the Net

By Thomas W. Giebel

InfoSeek Search offers a fast, powerful, and easy way to pull the needle of information you're looking for out of the Internet haystack. This on-line service provides reasonably priced full-text searches of Usenet, the World-Wide Web, the major news wires, and specialized collections of computer and business publications, including Computer Select and Hoover's Company Profiles.

InfoSeek employs a search engine that accepts natural language queries such as, "Who are the seven Baby Bells?" No arcane Boolean operators are needed, although there are simple ways to

customize a search to narrow the perimeters.

Search results are returned and ranked on-screen in order of relevance; the best matching documents are at the top of the list, and hyperlinks are provided that connect you directly to the document, Web page, or Usenet message referenced.

The search engine is billed as being precise, but nearly every search we tried came up with over 200 hits. The Baby Bell search on the Web yielded a document with the soap opera "The Young and the Restless" as the top hit. The same search produced better results in the news wires and computer collections, but the results

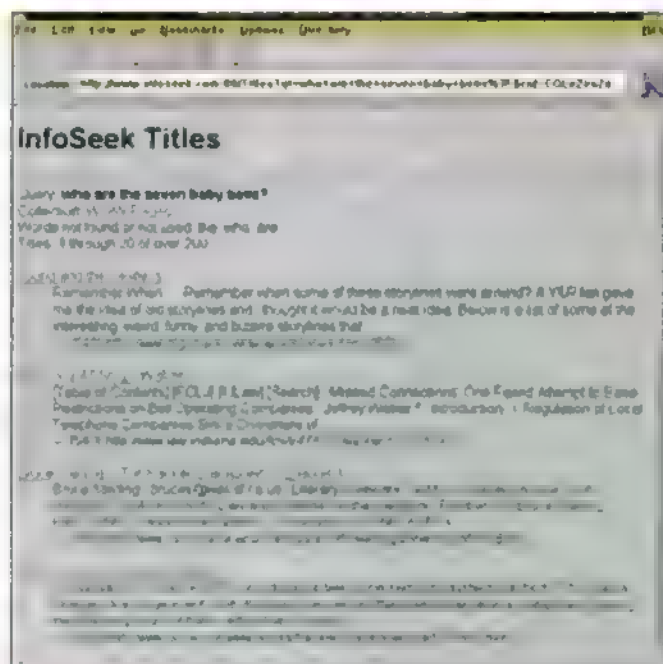
illustrate the proliferation of useless and irrelevant information on the Net.

InfoSeek costs \$9.95 per month for 100 transactions and \$.10 for each query after that. This com-

pares with the per-page charges of \$.05 to \$.05 from the major on-line services.

If you're looking for a way to sift more efficiently through the mountain of data to be found on the Internet, InfoSeek can help.

InfoSeek Search. \$9.95 per month for 100 transactions; additional transactions, \$.10 each. Requires: World-Wide Web browser with forms and NCSA authentication support. InfoSeek Corp., Santa Clara, CA; 408-982-4450; fax, 408-986-1889; e-mail, info@infoseek.com; URL: http://www.infoseek.com.



WHEAT AND CHAFF: InfoSeek can cull valuable information but includes irrelevant citations.

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- Optional second battery can substitute for floppy disk drive
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January 24, 1995
HP OmniBook 600

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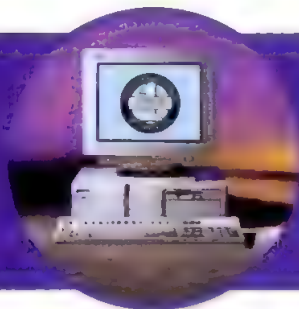
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- 8-MB RAM, expandable to 96-MB
- Ultra VGA2 local-bus accelerated video supporting up to 1280 x 1024 resolution
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- Integrated Desktop Management Interface (DMI)³
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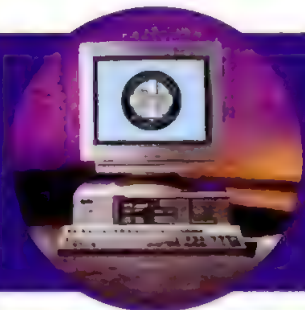
- Intel 50- and 66-MHz 486DX2, 100-MHz DX4, upgradeable to Pentium Overdrive
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- Optional PCI Integrated 32-bit 10Base-T networking
- Integrated Desktop Management Interface (DMI)³
- EPA Energy Star certified
- Free three-year limited warranty for parts and labor²



*Source: 1994 J.D. Power and Associates Desktop PC Customer Satisfaction Study.™ Study conducted among business users and based on 1,528 user respondents.
**Feature included with some models. All HP Vectra PCs come with MS-DOS® 6.2 and MS Windows for Workgroups 3.11 pre-installed; HP mouse and keyboard included.
¹U.S. list price; dealer prices may vary. Monitor not included. ²Other capacities available. ³First year on-site, 24-hour service. Second and third year return to dealer.
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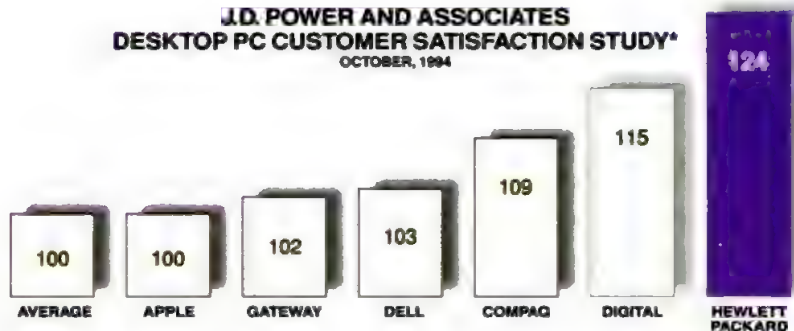
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- Integrated 32-bit PCI SCSI-2 interface
- PCI integrated 64-bit S3 Vision-864 graphics with 1280 x 1024 resolution or PCI MGA Ultima Plus graphics with up to 1600 x 1200 resolution
- 32-bit PCI IDE hard disk interface
- 8 or 16 MB of RAM, expandable to 256 MB
- PCI Integrated 32-bit 10Base-T networking
- Integrated Desktop Management Interface (DMI)²
- Free three-year limited warranty for parts and labor³



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J.D. POWER AND ASSOCIATES DESKTOP PC CUSTOMER SATISFACTION STUDY* OCTOBER, 1994



J.D. Power and Associates ranks HP highest in customer satisfaction among desktop personal computer business users.

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Of course, HP PCs also lead the pack in value, with all the features you need, at prices you can afford.

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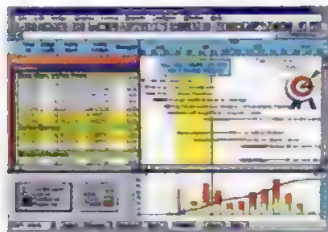
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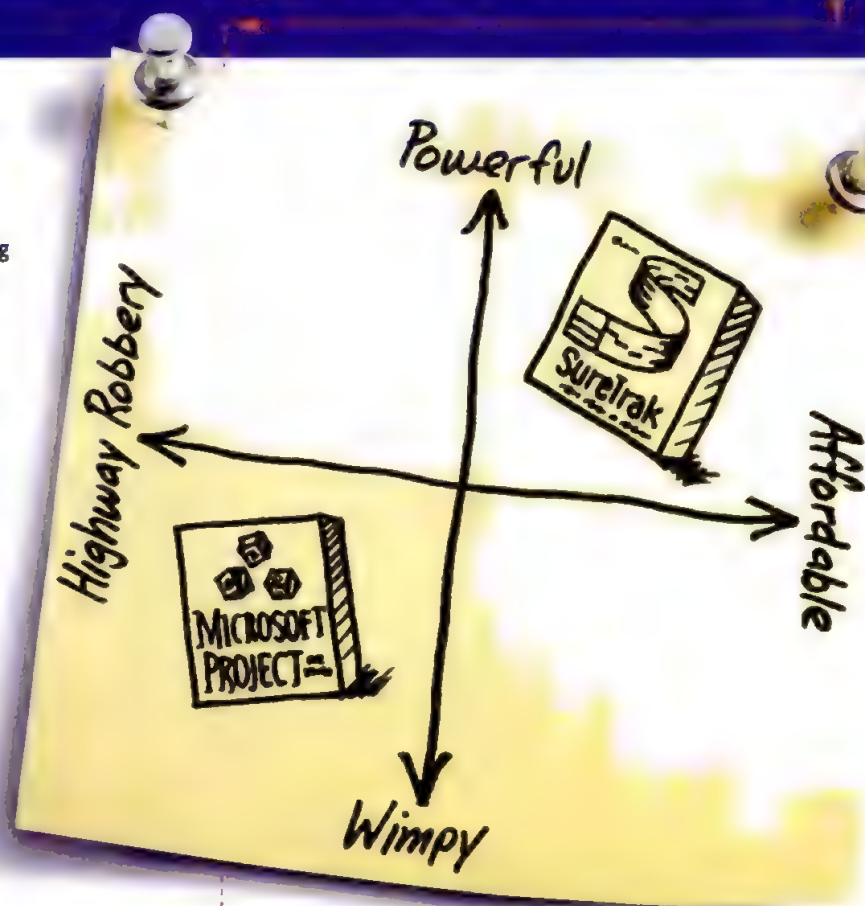
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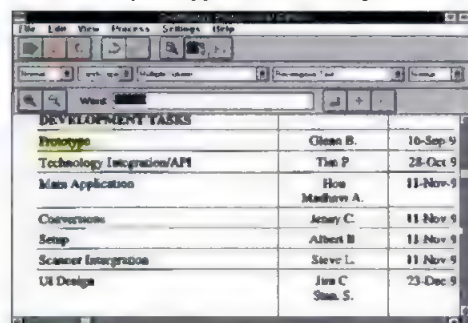
New & Improved

NEWS OF ANNOUNCED PRODUCTS AND UPGRADES

By Asa Somers

OCR Leaps Forward

The problem with optical character recognition (OCR) packages—apart from not always correctly recognizing words—has traditionally been that they don't work directly with your word processor. TextBridge Professional Edition 3.0, from **Xerox Corp.**, addresses both issues. Its Document Recognition Technology flows text directly into your word processor for editing; you launch the program by clicking on "TextBridge OCR" from the menu bar of your application. The imported doc-



DEVELOPMENT TASKS		
Prototype	Chris B.	10-Sep-9
Technology Integration/API	Tim P.	28-Oct-9
Main Application	How Mathew A.	11-Nov-9
Conversions	Janey C.	11-Nov-9
Setup	Albert B.	11-Nov-9
Scanner Integration	Steve L.	11-Nov-9
UI Design	Jim C.	23-Dec-9
	Sam S.	

WRITE ON: TextBridge Professional preserves your document's original formatting.

uments retain their original format, including graphics, captions, and headers and footers.

You can import editable tables into a word processor or spreadsheet, and the Custom Proof feature lets you adjust the package's level of proof-reading pickiness. On-the-fly training is also supported, letting you intervene and correct recognition errors. Xerox offers the \$99 TextBridge 3.0 for less-demanding OCR requirements.

TextBridge Professional Edition 3.0. List price: \$349 (competitive upgrade, \$199). Xerox Corp., Palo Alto, CA; 800-248-6550 ext. 3, 415-813-6800. Circle 405 on reader service card

A File Unzips Itself

Niko Mak Computing is shipping WinZip Self-Extractor, a Windows-based utility that lets you create a self-extracting .ZIP file. These files include decompression or unzipping software, so they can be decompressed by another person without using a separate program. Unzipping self-extracting files is as easy as double-clicking on an icon. The Self-Extractor includes a license to distribute royalty-free .ZIP files.

WinZip Self-Extractor. List price: \$49. Niko Mak Computing Inc., Bristol, CT; 800-242-4775; fax, 713-524-6398.

Circle 406 on reader service card

Photography by Thom O'Connor



HP Goes Wireless: Latest LaserJets Feature IR

Intended for use in small-office environments, the new LaserJet 5P and 5MP printers, from **Hewlett-Packard Co.**, feature 6-page-per-minute output speeds, 600- by 600-dpi print quality, and a slew of built-in fonts. Most impressive, however, these two entry-level networkable models—expected to sell at street prices of \$900 and \$1,100, respectively—feature built-in IrDA-compliant infrared ports for wireless printing.

The LaserJet 5P uses HP's enhanced PCL 5 printer language. It comes with 2MB of standard memory (expandable to 50MB via standard SIMMs) and 45 built-in scalable fonts, and it offers an additional 65 TrueType fonts on-disk. The LaserJet 5MP includes Adobe PostScript Level 2 software for use in Macintosh or mixed PC/Mac environments. It includes 3MB of memory (expandable to 35MB) and 35 built-in fonts, with an additional 75 fonts on-disk.

The two models offer several connectivity options; each comes with two high-speed bidirectional parallel ports (one B-type, one C-type), a LocalTalk port, and an infrared port; the LaserJet automatically switches among input sources. The IR port allows for data transfer at speeds of up to 115 Kbps and at distances of up to 3 feet. You must have a desktop or notebook PC equipped with both an IR port and infrared printing capabilities to do wireless printing on the LaserJets. IBM's ThinkPads and HP's OmniBooks have this capability, and more IR-ready machines are expected soon.

HP LaserJet 5P. List price: \$1,109. **HP LaserJet 5MP.** List price: \$1,299. Hewlett-Packard Co., Santa Clara, CA; 800-752-0900.

Circle 404 on reader service card

Picture Window Develops

Version 1.1 of Picture Window, a digital-imaging system from **Digital Light & Color (DLC)**, includes a host of enhancements and contains an automatic ordering feature for DLC's quick-turn-around print service. Picture Window 1.1 now lets you create custom slide shows that can be viewed without a local copy of the program. This version also offers rudimentary but effective image-editing filters such as warp, blur, unsharp masking, and noise transformation, as well as a way to turn your favorite pictures into screen savers.

Once your photos look right on-screen, Picture Window can automatically prepare them for shipping to DLC's service bureau, which will print them out and send them back to you—by overnight air, if you specify. Prices are a bit steep: \$8.95 plus shipping for a single medium-size print (up to 6.0 by 8.9 inches) and \$14.95 for a large print (up to 8.5 by 11.9 inches).

Picture Window, Version 1.1. List price: \$99. Digital Light & Color Inc., Cambridge, MA; 800-577-7090, 617-497-9027; fax, 617-576-1062.

Circle 411 on reader service card

Inside the SAT: No #2 Pencil Required

It's that time of year again, when high school students seriously consider fleeing the country rather than face the dreaded SAT college-entrance exam. Inside the SAT, from **The Princeton Review Management Corp.**, features test-taking strategy, four practice exams, a 300-word Vocabulary Hit Parade, and detailed lessons on every type of question in the verbal and math sections of the SAT to help unconfident test takers assuage their fears. Based on the Princeton Review



GOOD QUESTION: Inside the SAT uses humor in the hallway to teach test-taking skills.

New & Improved

classroom series, the product emphasizes that the SAT measures test-taking skills rather than intelligence and provides a humorous comic book-style interface to soothe students' nerves.

Inside the SAT. Estimated street price: \$54. The Princeton Review Management Corp., New York, NY; 800-955-3700 ext. 3335, 212-874-8282.

Circle 408 on reader service card

ColorMobile Office: One if By Hand, Two if by Sheet

Primax Electronics has introduced the ColorMobile Office color scanner, a modular unit that does both hand-held and sheet-fed scanning. You simply snap on attachments to turn the handheld unit—which is useful for scanning pages of a bound book—into a sheet-fed scanner for handling photographs and other single sheets. Snap on the motor module instead for hands-free image scanning; the trackpad attachment allows you to scan up to A4-size documents.

ColorMobile Office is capable of handling true-color scanning and resolutions of 100 to 400 dots per inch. You can change resolution, image size, and image type via the included Twain-compliant software. With all its attachments, ColorMobile Office weighs a mere 2 pounds; Primax offers the scanner without the attachments for \$249.



HANDY-DANDY: With all the attachments, the scanner weighs only 2 pounds.

Primax ColorMobile Office. List price: \$329. Primax Electronics, Campbell, CA; 800-388-3693, 408-364-2800.

Circle 409 on reader service card

Suite Little Deal

Software suites may provide all the modules you'll need for business computing, but packages such as Microsoft Office or Lotus SmartSuite can take up loads of hard disk space and can be difficult to learn. Ability for Windows, from **Ability Plus Software**, is an office suite that contains modules for word processing, spreadsheets, databases, forms, charts, and communications—all with a single interface and command structure. You can launch any of the modules from a

HARDWARE BRIEFS

If your IBM PS/2 is collecting dust, you can now upgrade it to 486 power with a \$295 Genesis/PC Replacement Motherboard from **PC Enterprises**. There are Genesis boards for use with PS/2 models 25, 25 286, 30 286, and 55SX. Each replacement board uses a Texas Instruments 40-MHz 486 CPU with 1K of internal cache and provides two serial ports, an enhanced parallel port, two 16-bit ISA expansion slots, and sockets for 128K of secondary cache. You can install up to 32MB of memory, and the Genesis provides 256-color SVGA graphics. 800-922-7257.

Upgrade your computer for multimedia with the new Sound Blaster Multimedia Home 4x from **Creative Technology**. This hardware kit is available on the street for about \$579 and includes an internal quad-speed CD-ROM drive, a Sound Blaster 16 card, speakers, and a hands-free microphone. The CD-ROM drive provides a 600-Kbps maximum transfer rate and a 250-ms access rate. 800-998-5227.

With former New York Giants great Lawrence Taylor at the helm, **Virtual Entertainment Systems** will soon be shipping its 7th Sense virtual-reality entertainment system. Designed for PC-based game playing, the \$399 7th Sense comprises a 28-ounce head-mounted display (HMD), an interface card, and bundled game software. The HMD features 360-degree head tracking, stereo sound, external controls, and a built-in microphone. 914-631-9400; fax, 914-631-9487.

ViewSonic Corp., now in partnership with **Optquest**, has expanded the Optquest Value Line of monitors with the \$699 17-inch Model 1765DC. The new monitor features 0.28-mm dot pitch, a flat-square tube, a nonglare screen, and on-screen digital controls and can handle an 80-Hz refresh rate at a resolution of 1,024-by-768. 909-468-3750; fax, 909-468-3770.

The \$395 DrawingSlate II digitizer tablet from **CalComp** features 2,540-line-per-inch maximum resolution, works as either a tablet or a pointing device, measures a mere 0.25 inches in thickness, and weighs only 1.5 pounds. The bundled software now features area mapping, which lets you determine the ratio of tablet area to screen area for precision work, and recordable macros, which let you program the tablet or the buttons of the included pointing tool. 602-948-6540.

set of icons in the Ability Library Manager, a control module where you can also browse, search, or copy any of your Ability files. More important, the OLE 2.0-compliant Ability requires only 20MB of hard disk space. When you change figures in a document, for example, linked spreadsheets or graphs automatically



LITTLE BIG MAN: The 3.1-pound BJC-70 prints 0.8 pages per minute in color.

change accordingly. You can fax an open file or export it to a third-party application with a single mouse-click. Ability features an interactive tutorial called Quick Tutor and cheat sheet-style Quickcards to help first-time users master the product.

Ability for Windows. List price: \$229. Ability Plus Software, Charlotte, NC; 800-946-4277, 704-364-3346; fax, 704-364-5676.

Circle 412 on reader service card

Baby-Size Printer Offers Full-Grown Features

It's not as compact and portable as Pentax's Citizen PN60 color printer, but then again, you aren't forced to sacrifice print speed or features, either. The new BJC-70 color printer from **Canon Computer Systems** packs quite a bit of performance into a refreshing design: It measures 2.2 by 11.8 by 6.2 inches (HWD) and weighs 3.1 pounds. It manages 720- by 360-dpi resolution in black mode and 360-by-360 in color; the printer can turn out a full-color sheet in about 75 seconds.

The BJC-70's moisture- and light-resistant inks come in compact cartridges; a single black replacement tank costs \$12, and a color tank costs \$22. The cartridges are rated for 170 printed monochrome pages and 40 to 50 color pages, while the included nickel-hydride battery will print up to 200 pages on a single charge. You can print on plain or coated paper, cardstock, transparencies, or envelopes, and the printer handles letter-, legal-, and A4-size paper. It even automatically feeds up to 30 sheets and includes 7 built-in bitmap fonts and 20 scalable TrueType fonts.

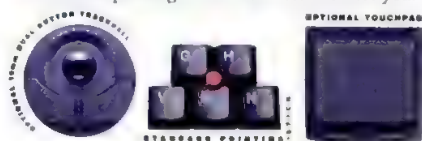
Canon BJC-70. List price: \$399. Canon Computer Systems, Costa Mesa, CA; 800-848-4123.

Circle 407 on reader service card

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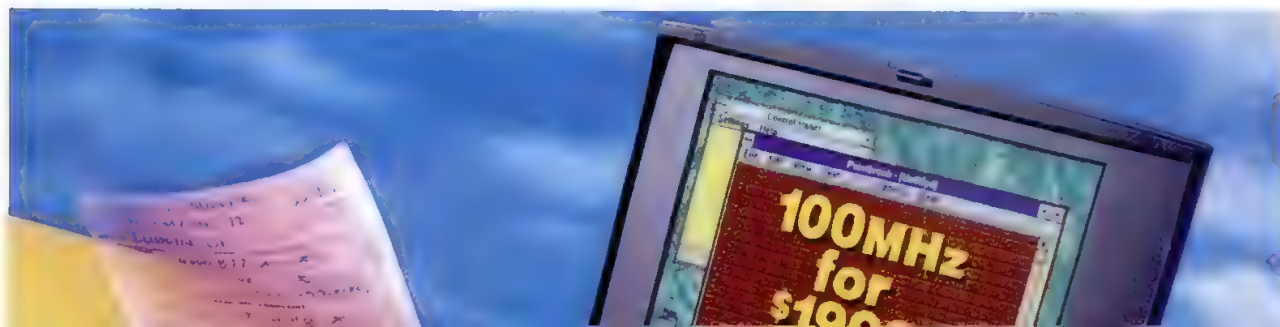
April 1995, WinBook XP
Best Value 486DX4 Notebook

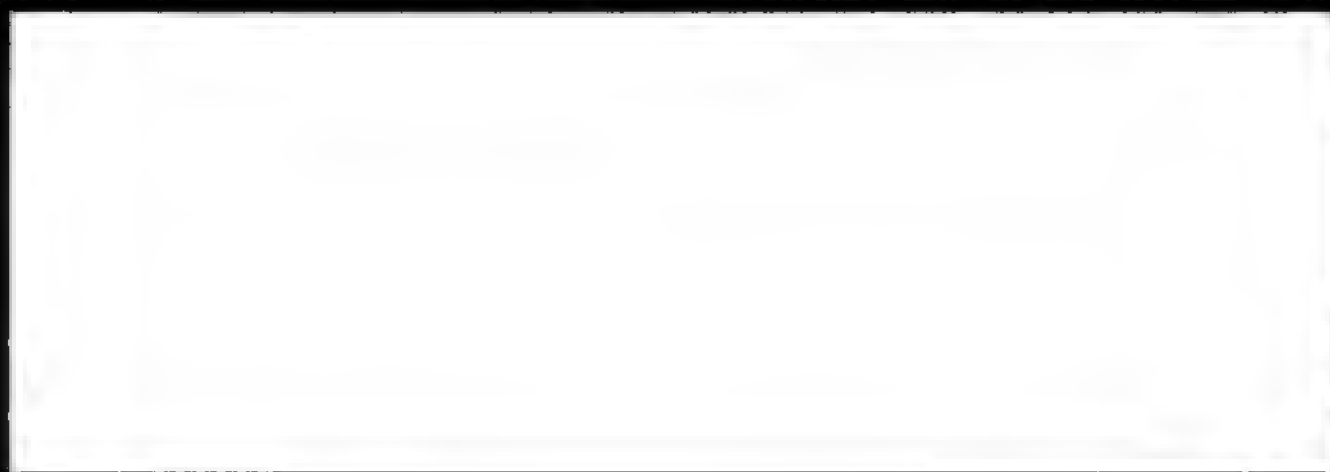


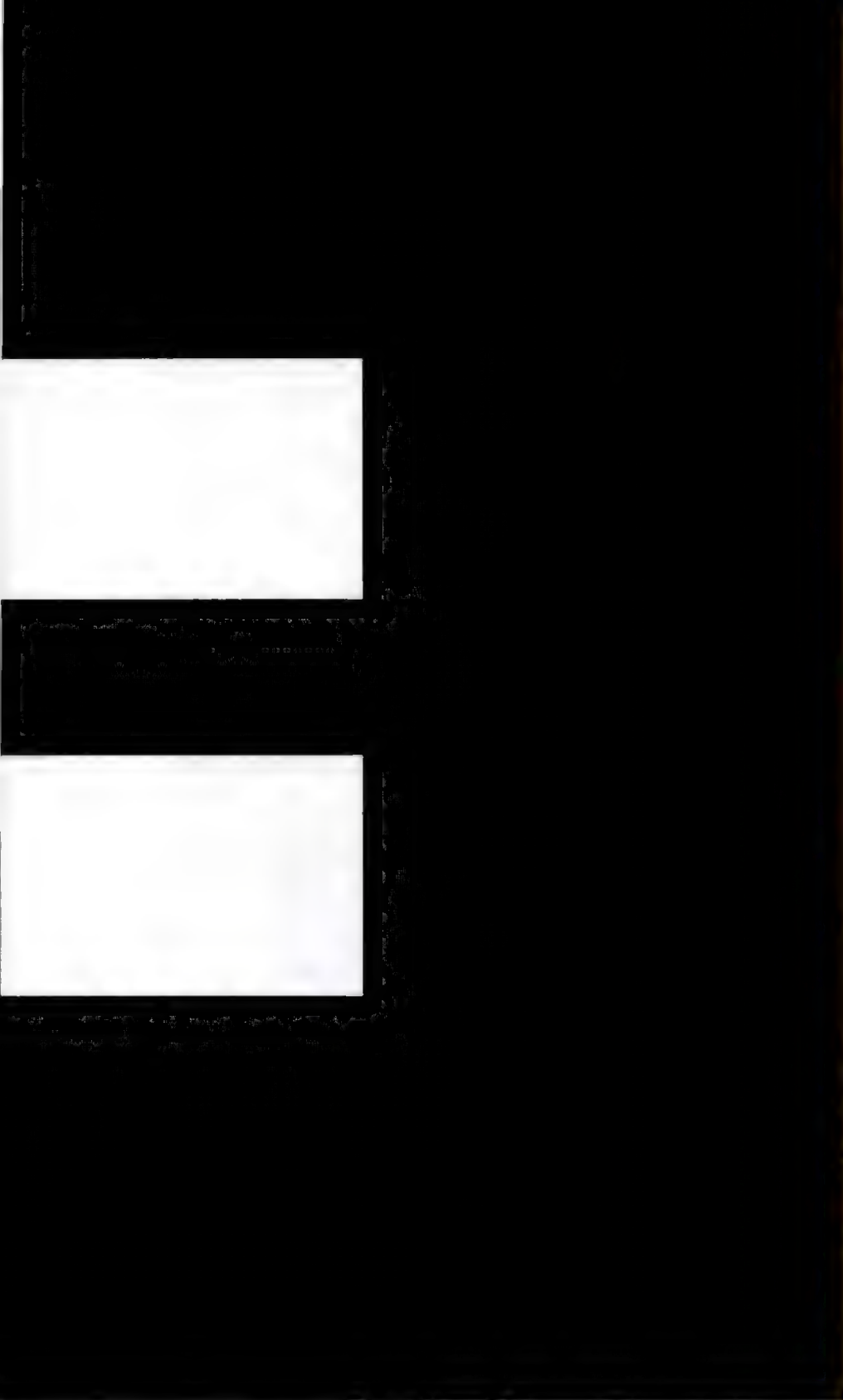
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Plus there's brilliant color. The math couldn't be simpler.

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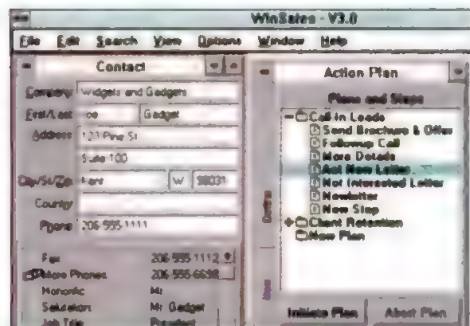


iJC-4000
color printer

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Sales Plans Get Smart

The namesake product from **WinSales**, now in Version 3.0, automates the sales and marketing process via new event-driven triggers. WinSales relies on Smart Plans, which have the ability to



WHO, TRIGGER: Smart Plans use event-driven triggers to update your database.

check the status of other events in a database and update your sales plan accordingly. The product is fully networkable and has a contact manager that provides unlimited customizable fields and a function that lets you construct database queries in plain English. WinSales 3.0 is OLE 2.0-compliant and has MAPI-compliant e-mail and group scheduling.

WinSales, Version 3.0. List price: Single-user version, \$495; five-user network version, \$1,495. WinSales Inc., Bellevue, WA; 206-747-2464; fax, 206-747-2955.

Circle 413 on reader service card

CD-ROM Notebook Packs Pentium Power

Panasonic Personal Computer Co. is shipping the V41 Pentium notebook, which features a 75-MHz Pentium CPU and a double-speed CD-ROM drive. The model comes with a 10.4-inch active-matrix display, a 680MB hard disk, and either 8MB or 16MB of RAM (expandable to 32MB). The V41 Pentium also includes 16-bit sound capabilities with MIDI and .WAV support, two stereo speakers, and a microphone.

The V41 Pentium has an internal battery that gives only about an hour of use; a second battery, which ships with the notebook, provides an additional 2 hours. You plug this battery into the notebook's Multimedia Pocket, which also accepts a floppy disk drive (included) or an optional hardware MPEG module that supports full-screen, full-motion video. When the second battery is installed, the unit's weight soars to 9 pounds.

Panasonic V41 Pentium. List price: With 8MB of RAM, \$7,799; with 16MB of RAM, \$8,399. Panasonic Personal Computer Co., Secaucus, NJ; 800-742-8086.

Circle 410 on reader service card

SOFTWARE BRIEFS

Coral Corp. has begun shipping Coral Gallery 2, a CD-ROM-based multimedia file manager that includes 15,000 clip-art images, 500 photos, 500 fonts, 75 sound clips, and 10 video clips. The \$99 Gallery 2 is OLE 2.0-compliant and provides basic image-editing features, a clip-art editor, font management capabilities, and a screen-capture utility. It can access any Twain-compliant scanner and lets users create slide shows. 800-772-6735 (U.S.); 800-394-3729 (Canada).

SpinWizard Corporate Edition, from **Tanyis Technology**, lets network managers configure and distribute applications within Windows via the program's rotatable 3-D carousel of icons. Each icon can represent any application, file, or command sequence and can be tailored to the requirements of individual users. SpinWizard CE's Record function lets users record macros and set up icons for one-touch automation. The product lists for \$55 per node for 50 or fewer licenses. 800-460-4266, 512-263-1700.

For a low-cost address management tool, check out **Insight Software Solutions'** Smart Address for Windows, Version 2.0. This latest release (\$39) features support for an unlimited number of address books, each with up to 6,500 addresses; network support; fields for reminders with advance warning before major appointments or events; powerful search capabilities; and a host of printing options for outputting envelopes, labels, and Filofax pages. 801-295-1890; fax, 801-299-1781.

VisPro/Reports, from **HockWare**, is an object-oriented, 32-bit programmable report writer for OS/2 that leverages the power of the REXX programming language. VisPro/Reports features free-format report drawing, offering the user full control over object placement, font, and color, and support for printing on every type of Avery label. The \$199 product has full zooming capabilities, gives you access to data in third-party REXX libraries, and supports banded reports. 919-380-0616; fax, 919-380-0757.

MicroLogic Software is shipping the PrintMaster Gold CD Bonus Pack, which includes the company's entry-level desktop publishing program and a slew of borders, patterns, and clip art. The program also includes templates for greeting cards, banners, certificates, and stationery. A computerized voice instructs beginners in using various features. 800-888-9078.

Multimedia Crosses Platforms with PowerMedia

RAD Technologies has recently introduced PowerMedia, an open-system authoring tool for creating multimedia applications for the Internet, client/server networks, and CD-ROM. PowerMedia features point-and-click development and works across Macintosh, Windows, and Windows NT desktop systems and HP, Silicon Graphics, and Sun workstations. The product is compatible with HTTP and the World-Wide Web, and PowerMedia apps can be scaled to fit any display. **PowerMedia.** List price: Windows version, \$995. RAD Technologies Inc., Palo Alto, CA; 800-773-4723, 415-617-9430; fax, 415-473-6876.

Circle 414 on reader service card

A Monitor Flips Out

When in portrait mode, **Portrait Display Labs'** Pivot 1700 monitor offers more vertical space than a standard 20-inch display, allowing you to see a full letter-size page on-screen. You can pivot the monitor into landscape mode for working on spreadsheets or other horizontally oriented applications; you need not close your current



SWITCH HITTER: The Pivot 1700 displays a whole letter-size page.

application to pivot the monitor.

The first Pivot 1700 will ship in June with a 0.26-mm dot pitch, and will manage a noninterlaced resolution of 1,024-by-768 at a 76-Hz refresh rate. Portrait Display Labs plans to begin shipping the higher-resolution Pivot 17 Professional in August.

Portrait Pivot 1700. Estimated street price: \$895. Portrait Display Labs, Fremont, CA; 800-858-7744, 510-249-0444; fax, 510-249-0445.

Circle 415 on reader service card

Drag and Drop? AnyTime

Individual Software is shipping Version 3.0 of its low-maintenance PIM, AnyTime for Windows. This version adds drag-and-drop scheduling, an auto-dial feature, and automatic envelope printing. AnyTime 3.0 prints calendars to fit a number of paper-based organizers and prints to Avery labels. It is networkable and offers repeat scheduling, task prioritization, and warnings of overlapping appointments.

AnyTime for Windows, Version 3.0. Estimated street price: \$24.99. Individual Software Inc., Pleasanton, CA; 800-822-3522, 510-734-6767.

Circle 431 on reader service card



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DeluxScan 15 Pro	15"	0.28	1280 x 1024	✓
DeluxScan 17	17"	0.28	1280 x 1024	✓
DeluxScan 17 Pro	17"	0.26	1600 x 1280	✓
DeluxScan 21	21"	0.28	1600 x 1280	✓

So next time you think you've seen it all, maybe it's time for another look. DeluxScan: *All the features. Hyundai value.* Something you definitely don't see everyday.

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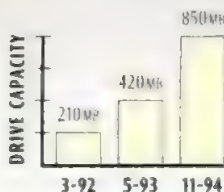
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REVIEWS OF THE LATEST BOOKS FOR THE PC USER

Edited by Tin Albano

MOM Returns for Another Nurturing Visit

BY J.W. OLSEN

Following up on the success of *CD MOM: The Mother of All Windows Books*, Barry Simon and Woody Leonhard have written *PC MOM: The Mother of All PC Books*. The book—which comes with two CDs—tries to explain everything about PCs.

PC MOM pursues the narrow path between boring techie books that take themselves all too seriously and books that try so hard to spoon-feed subjects that all you get is pabulum. At that it succeeds admirably. If you enjoyed the three icon characters who presented distinct perspectives throughout *CD MOM*, you'll love *PC MOM*'s five downright iconoclastic characters who appear far more frequently. Otherwise, their constant presence can be disruptive.

The most distinctive difference between the books is *CD MOM*'s clear focus on Microsoft Windows and *PC MOM*'s broad subject matter spanning hardware and software. If you're new to PC innards, you'll find everything you need to know, from "mom's board" to SCSI to peripherals to monitors to modems. Particularly noteworthy is a computer-ills "survival course."

Software chapters emphasize fun. Fully a third of the book covers arguably the hottest software today: multimedia, "edutainment," and games, plus reference products. *PC MOM*

minutely details the DOS operating system and related topics. Not surprisingly, Windows—the subject of the earlier title—is explored only briefly.

The accompanying CD-ROMs are simultaneously a delight and a disappointment. Games addicts will revel in the complete Public Software Library shareware games collection. Curious about utilities like Dashboard, Version 1, Norton FileAssist, or PC Tools File Manager? They're here. Other notables include 4DOS (the acclaimed



READ ONLY RECOMMENDS



The *Starship Enterprise* has been many places on its "five-year mission," and the latest "strange new world" it has entered is cyberspace. Where the *Enterprise* goes, millions of Trekkies follow. Now, thanks to Michael Wolff's *Net Trek*, Trekkies can easily beam onto on-line Star Trek sites where fellow Trekkies gather, discuss trivia, play games, and chat about the merits of the Star Trek spin-offs. Think of it as your guidebook to an on-going Star Trek convention. \$19.00; Random House Electronic Publishing, 800-793-4665; ISBN: 0-679-76186-1.

shareware COMMAND.COM replacement), a standard edition of Shakespeare's works, and Free Phone's 1-800 Telephone Directory.

But while *PC MOM*'s CDs are worth far more than the cover price, we were spoiled by *CD MOM*, which byte for byte offers more useful business tools and software difficult to find on other CDs.

PC MOM surpasses most alternatives in its entertaining explanations of techie PC subjects. But as so often happens with movie sequels, the original was more appealing.

► **PC MOM: The Mother of All PC Books**, by Woody Leonhard and Barry Simon, \$49.95. Addison-Wesley, 800-358-4566; ISBN: 0-201-40681-0.

Circle 450 on reader service card

Visual C++ on Paper

BY JAY MUNRO

Microsoft's move to full documentation on CD for Visual C++ 2.0 (MSVC++) has not lessened the need for printed documentation. *The Six-Volume Documentation Collection for Microsoft Visual C++ Version 2.0 for Win32* is the full reference and tutorial for the Microsoft Visual C++ development environment. It lets programmers buy just the paper manuals they need or the whole set.

The set starts with *Microsoft Visual C++ The Users Guide* (\$24.95). Programmers familiar with C/C++ programming but not MSVC++ 2.0 will value this guide. *Programming with MFC and Win32* (\$24.95) covers the use of the Microsoft Foundation Class (MFC) library and the par-

ticulars of programming under Win32 and NT. Volume 3 is the *Microsoft Foundation Class Library Reference* (\$44.95).

For the programmer who has mastered the environment, the other volumes cover the com-



plete Win32 development needs in well-laid-out groups. The *Microsoft Visual C++ Language Reference* (\$22.95), which is split into C, C++, and preprocessor sections, covers each subject with definitions, details, and examples.

The *Microsoft Visual C++ Run-Time Library Reference* (\$22.95) has an easy-to-follow

format, with recurring section headings: Function, Return value, Parameters, Remarks, See also, Example, and Output. The last volume is the *Microsoft OLE Control Developers Kit* (\$22.95).

CD-ROM documentation is great for fast lookups and may well replace paper. Still, there is no replacement for a solid book by your side.

So for now, *The Six Volume Documentation Collection for Microsoft Visual C++ Version 2.0 for*

Win32 is a must-have for all Microsoft Visual C++ programmers.

► **Microsoft Visual C++ Version 2.0: The Six-Volume Documentation Collection for Microsoft Visual C++ Version 2.0 for Win32**, \$168.70. Microsoft Press, 800-677-7377; ISBN: 1-55615-794-0.

Circle 451 on reader service card



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new QuadSpeed drive (along with Enhanced Business Audio). This gives you faster access to the rich and vast references available on CD-ROM today, from national directories to archives of business publications.

Number Six. However large a hard drive may be, there are those who take it as a personal challenge to fill it up. With the new ProLinea PCs, however, we're determined to make that as difficult as possible. You can

LIKE MOST PC BUYERS, YOU'RE "BETTER VALUE," SO WE'VE CLEVERLY

even buy a ProLinea. You get to choose the processor you want—from very fast (486DX2/50MHz) to blindingly fast (Pentium/100MHz). This way, you don't have to buy more performance than you really need. And it's designed so that you can upgrade whenever you want.

Number Two. You may be familiar with the new standard bus architecture called PCI. Basically, it improves upon the previous technology by expanding the data path to 32 bits and radically speeding the flow of information to

your uses demand more, select 586-class models are now available with higher-performance VRAM graphics.

Number Four. Forgive the acronyms, but there's also a PCI local bus IDE interface. This not only pays off in improved disk performance, but it supports up to four storage devices. Which means you can easily add another hard drive, tape backup or CD-ROM drive when needed.

Number Five. As long as we're on the subject of CD-ROM, multimedia ProLinea models now come with our

choose a configuration with a disk capacity of 270MB, 420MB or 720MB. Any of which should put you well ahead of your burgeoning files.

Number Seven. ProLinea comes with 8MB or 16MB of RAM, depending on the model. And you can easily expand it to 136MB or 192MB—enough to take advantage of new 32-bit operating systems, run several programs at once and work with spreadsheets the size of Madison Square Garden.

Number Eight. ProLinea is filled with features designed to make your life

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Number Ten. The new ProLinea PCs have been designed so you can get inside without any special tools. The system board slides out to accept extra memory or a processor upgrade. The hard drive cage swings out so you can swap disks without reaching into inaccessible, finger-bruising areas. And when you snap in a new Compaq hard drive, you won't have to configure any enigmatic jumpers. When you connect the

become necessary, installing them will be no more difficult than running a software utility and clicking a few buttons on the screen.

Number Twelve. And what about the environment? Using a ProLinea won't by itself repair the ozone layer, but it's certainly a step in the right direction. For the sake of the atmosphere—and everyone who breathes it—our PC manufacturing process is completely CFC-free. And every model is now

PROBABLY SICK OF HEARING DISGUISED IT AS 12 IMPROVEMENTS.

a new network interface card, for example, ProLinea will sense the change and automatically reconfigure its software to support it.)

Number Nine. You decide exactly how expandable you want your ProLinea to be. You can select a desktop model with three expansion slots and three expansion bays or a model with four of each. Or you can choose a five-slot, five-bay mini-tower model that offers maximum expandability without taking up too much of your space.

cables, the settings have the good sense to take care of themselves.

Number Eleven. The ProLinea system board now incorporates Flash ROM technology. That means basic system ROM can be updated without major PC surgery. If future system updates should ever

Energy Star-compliant, which means less wasted energy for the planet and less wasted money on your power bill.

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TIMEX
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Michael J. Miller

Help! I'm Drowning in Data!

Have you ever tried looking for a specific bit of information on any of the on-line services or on the Internet? If your answer is yes, then you've undoubtedly experienced the frustration of knowing that what you want is available, but buried. Either you

don't know how to find it, or you're sick and tired of having to dig through piles of data just to get one helpful piece of intelligence.

Finding what you want on-line isn't going to get any easier. In the coming years, more information will be available on-line. Just look at how quickly World-Wide Web sites are proliferating. But take heart: Help may be on the way.

EDITORS TO THE RESCUE

How are you going to sort through all of this data? Maybe you won't have to. If you read my column regularly, you know that I believe most people will get the bulk of their on-line information through filters or editors, much in the way we now receive information filtered through television, newspapers, and magazines.

In the future, however, you'll be able to customize filters and other on-line editors. Already, PED Software's Journalist program lets you create a customized "electronic newspaper" filled with information you've told the program to pull down from CompuServe or Prodigy. Even better is Personal Journal, a new and customizable electronic version of *The Wall Street Journal*, which lets you pick which companies you want to track and which columns you want to read.

These two products are great, but they're just a first step. There will still be times when you're going to want some information that you haven't predefined or that doesn't come in through your regular channels. That's when you'll need to grab a shovel and once again personally delve into collections of data.

In "Publish Without Paper!" (February 7, 1995), we looked at a number of electronic publishing tools, ranging from hypertext

authoring tools designed for use on a LAN to HTML tools for publishing information on the Web. Now we're beginning to see these tools combined to form search engines designed for managing large collections of articles or other data on the Web.

SEARCHING THE WEB

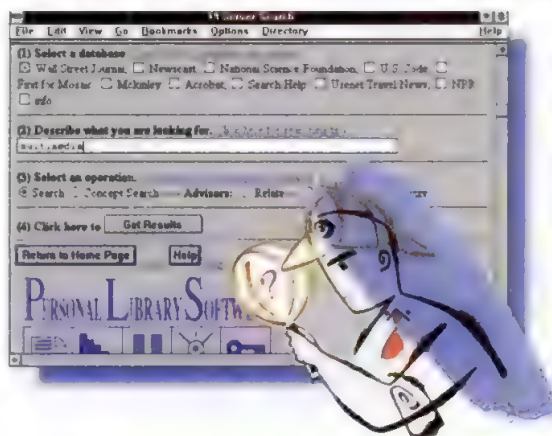
On the Web, search tools grow out of WAIS (Wide-Area Information Server), which is now available in both free-ware and commercial versions. WAIS typically runs on a Unix server, but we're beginning to see some versions designed for Windows NT servers. Thus far, it's primarily been a tool aimed mostly at public sites, not commercial ones, but that's changing.

What we need is a tool to help us determine which data is really relevant to what we're looking for. Why? Because the problem with a large collection of documents is that it's too easy to find too many answers to any query you can come up with. Search engines are now being designed to go beyond simple, broad-band searches.

One of the best approaches is used by Topic, from Verity. Topic has been a popular search engine used in

a variety of products, such as Lotus Notes 3.0 and Adobe Acrobat 2.0. It uses both keywords and information searching to come up with a ranking of how relevant each document is to what you are searching for. You might get back a list of a hundred documents that match your criteria, but they would be listed in order of the relevance that Topic assigns. (For a demo, go to <http://www.verity.com>.)

A different approach is offered by Architext, which uses what it calls context-based searching. Architext lets you enter a



On-line search engines will help us find the most relevant information on the Internet.

Michael J. Miller

query and then comes up with the data you want based on the content of the documents themselves. It tries to figure out the content of the documents based on the context that the words are in. The result is that Architext's system will find stories that don't have any of the words in your search, but that do have the same general meaning. For instance, you might look for "presidents" and find an article that references "Bush and Clinton." In theory, it won't find things with the right words but the wrong meaning. This engine probably won't be right for everyone, but its approach is certainly interesting. (Check out the demo at http://home.mcom.com/MCOM/search_docs/index.html.)

Oracle wants to be the big database for documents and multimedia elements on the Internet, and it already has a variety of products available. The most compelling is Context, which can go through a variety of documents and create its own summary, pulling about three key sentences from each of the

documents it selects. (You can check out a demo at <http://www.oracle.com>.)

There are other approaches to letting you search for data on the Web or on other wide-area networks. Personal Library Software now has an Internet version of its Personal Librarian called PLServer. (A demo is available at <http://www.pls.com>.)

When it comes to organizing your information, Lotus isn't about to be left out. The company is developing a group of products, collectively known as InterNotes, that will let you access Internet newsgroups from within Lotus Notes.

InterNotes products will also let you turn Notes databases into HTML documents that can be published on the Web. (For more info, see the sidebar "Lotus Ties Notes to the Internet" in this issue's story "The Internet Means Business.")

Folio Corp., which makes Folio Views—our Editors' Choice among LAN-based hypertext publishing tools—is getting in the act with an Internet version of Folio Views that lets you publish your "infobases" on the Internet and search those documents with things like relevance-based search tools. This product is more oriented toward corporate databases, not commercial publishers. Folio

Views does, however, show us how much easier it's going to be for people to become publishers of large amounts of data. (Take a look at <http://www.folio.com>.)

Folio has developed a relationship with the Copyright Clearance Center (which represents most major publishers), so that companies that want to place documents or articles on a corporate server will be able to let employees search for those documents legally.

Both Folio and Lotus seem primarily aimed at companies who want to publish corporate data for their own customers, while many of the other products seem aimed at people who want to publish a lot of information for the general public.

Turning our PCs into intelligent information appliances capable of finding the data we need will involve combining the features of many of these products—from hypertext systems and indexing programs to electronic document packages, browsers and communications packages, intelligent agents, and multimedia databases. We have a long way to go, but getting there is crucial if we're going to find that one piece of information in the huge collection of data that will be available. □

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drag.
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drag...

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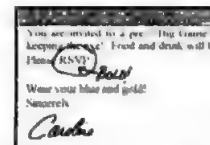
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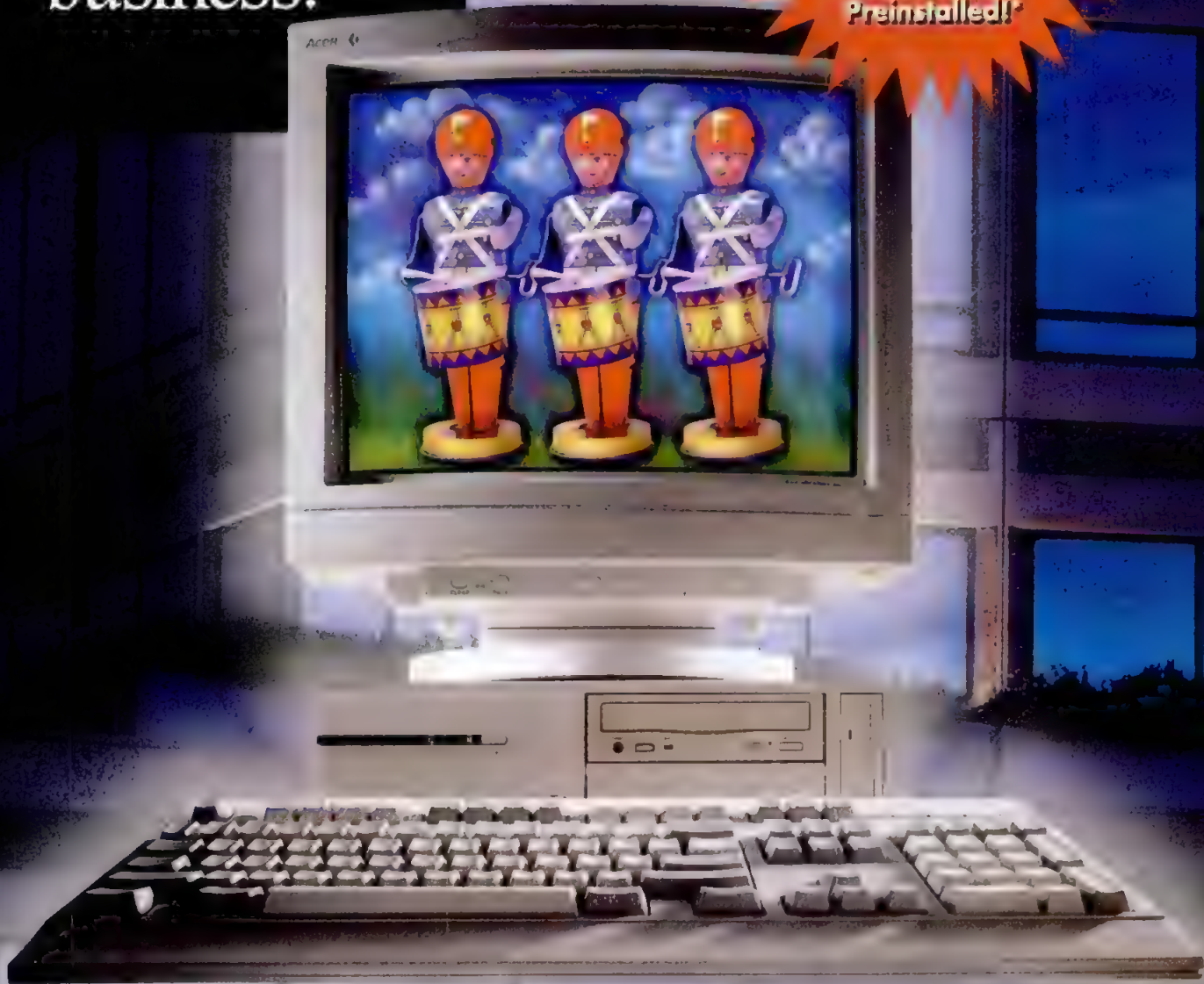
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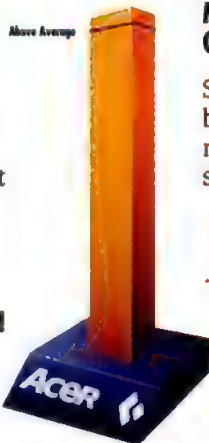
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Bill Machrone

Taste vs. Technology

As Immanuel Kant once remarked, "*De gustibus non est disputandum*" (there is no disputing taste). Nowhere is this more true than with user interfaces, keyboards, and pointing devices. Subjectivity rules. But as Ayn Rand said, "Check your premises."

You may think that you've got the perfect setup, but unless you try alternatives, you may find that you've been shortchanging yourself, sometimes in unexpected ways.

Technological improvement is relentless, as is the study of ergonomics. The latest mice from Microsoft and Logitech aren't just different, they're better. You can use them longer, with less fatigue. The configuration programs offer more adjustments and tailoring to your preferences than they did in the past. If you're still using an original "Dove bar" mouse, gone all grimy around the edges, and with the original driver software, you need to check out the newer models and thoroughly explore the settings available in the Control Panel. You may find that some of the newer options, such as cursor growth, mouse trails, and acceleration make your job easier.

I've been testing a lot of new laptops lately, and I've developed a preference for the ones with the eraser-head pointing devices because the keyboard is generally more compact and I have to perform fewer contortions to move the cursor. My everyday machine is a Gateway HandBook, and every time I come back to it from one of these other machines I notice how sloppy its pointing stick feels. In fact, I had started to avoid using it, preferring to use Alt sequences and the cursor keys. As I was using it last night, I realized that most of the mechanical energy I was putting into pointing was being absorbed by the stick's rubber cover. It had gotten spongy and soft over more than a year of use, and I had compensated both in the way I pressed it and the settings in the Control Panel.

I found a piece of firm rubber in the basement that was roughly the right shape and size, trimmed it with a razor blade, drilled a hole in the bottom, and sanded it to the right shape.

I made mine a little broader on top than the original and gave it a slight, fingertip-fitting concave instead of the original's convex shape. What a difference! I felt as if I was using a new Toshiba or IBM notebook instead of this well-worn Gateway.

Are you still struggling with File Manager/Program Manager? You owe it to yourself at least to try The Norton Desktop or Dashboard. Feeling bold? Try OS/2 Warp and find out where Microsoft got some of the good ideas that are going (eventually) into Windows 95. You also get the benefit of real multitasking and, for most users, greater robustness.

While other things are getting better, most keyboards are just getting cheaper. The average keyboard is junk, lacking the tactile feedback, structural rigidity, or smooth action that makes for effortless typing. Old IBM/new Lexmark keyboards are by far the best overall, far superior to the cheapo garbage that comes with most machines. Laptop keyboards are just as variable. Many keyboards are too stiff—a waste of energy and a source of fatigue. Some are so light that they feel flimsy. A few are just right. The new IBM 701C "Butterfly" has unquestionably the best keyboard I've ever used on a laptop, even better than the excellent Texas Instruments keyboards.

Finally, watch new users—do some active listening. A friend recently moved to Windows applications from character-mode WordPerfect and commented on how sensitive the mouse was; she barely needed to touch it. What sounded like a compliment was actually a complaint. So we twiddled the sensitivity and acceleration controls, which had been turned all the way up so that it was nearly unusable. New technology suddenly became far more tenable to her. How about you? □



*How good is your setup?
You may be
shortchanging yourself.*

General Motors.

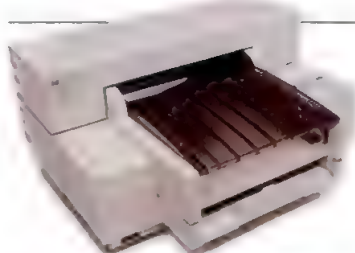
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we believe in
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are obvious."*



You're driving in broad daylight. Suddenly, a car's lights catch your eyes. They could be our new daytime running lamps (DRLs). These special low-intensity headlights help alert other drivers with light, like your car horn can alert them with sound, according to Jay Minotas, a member of General Motors' safety team. They're simple, practical, and easy to use because they come on automatically. And research shows they reduce collisions, and that can help save lives. GM is introducing daytime running lamps in 1995, and they'll be shining on all its vehicles by 1997. Right now, no other domestic auto company offers them. Jay says he hopes that will change: "The sooner every car and truck has DRLs, the safer we'll all be."

Second Looks

LIVING WITH THE PRODUCTS WE REVIEW



HP's Color Dulled by Drivers

Hewlett-Packard's HP DeskJet 500 series color printers have been a hit at *PC Magazine* since day one, garnering several Editors' Choices. But driver problems have made performance, over long-term use, less than sparkling.

Printing in color from Windows is a complex ballet of application software, the printer driver, and even the video driver. Users have experienced a number of bugs and GPFs,

often caused by the DeskJet 500's interactions with applications. The Version 5 drivers fixed the bugs in the previous version but introduced bugs of their own. One user's "magic" solution was to install the Version 5 driver, then reinstall Version 4.

You can find the drivers on CompuServe's HP support forum (Go HP). D5W3US.EXE is the file for Version 5; D5WN31.ZIP is for Version 4.1. You should also read WINPRT.DJ5 for tips on solving Windows printing problems.

By the way, DeskJet 550C and 560C printers manufactured from June 1993 through March 1994 had paper-feed problems. The fix-it kit is an abrasive pad and a software utility that spins the rollers. If you are having paper-feed problems, contact HP at 800-656-2324.

A Sad Farewell to Gateway's HandBook

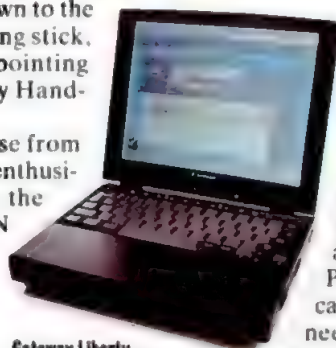
I was disappointed to hear that Gateway 2000 has discontinued the HandBook (First Looks, December 21, 1993), so here is a second (and last) look at the subnotebook. I've had a HandBook for a year and a half, and it's become part of my life. Those of us who prize light weight and small size above all else have loved the HandBook, but as a Gateway rep said, "You guys just didn't buy enough of them."

Gateway's new Liberty is a very competent subnotebook, but for me, it's a HandBook on steroids. Gateway actually plans to market

the Liberty as a portable that fills the niche between notebooks and subnotebooks. The Liberty's keyboard is identical to the HandBook's, right down to the EZ Point pointing stick, except that the pointing isn't as EZ as my HandBook.

Early response from Liberty users is enthusiastic. They love the big 10.4-inch STN display, even though it may not have the crispness of a TFT screen. The reduced off-axis viewing angle gives you a modicum of privacy when you're using it in public places.

The Liberty's DX4/100 blows the 486/25 HandBook into the weeds, and the 540MB hard disk is about the biggest one you can get in a notebook. The Liberty's battery runs for a little more than 3 hours, which is fine for a machine of this power and weight. I miss the compactness of the HandBook, but the power of the Liberty is seductive.



Gateway Liberty.

OS/2 Warp Is Oh So Close

In my extended "conversation" with OS/2 Warp users, I've uncovered pockets of frustration that offset the euphoria experienced by most. Judging from my e-mail, I estimate that perhaps 2 percent of the people who try Warp are utterly unsuccessful. The successful ones are sure that the number is much lower; the unsuccessful ones are sure it's much higher.

I had to wait a long time for video drivers so I could use OS/2 in modes other than 640-by-480; other users simply swapped their cards for ones like the ATI Mach 64, known to work well with OS/2. When it comes to CD-ROM support, however, there doesn't seem to be any gray area between "works great" and "hosed."

The folks at IBM are providing a terrific amount of software at a very reasonable price, but they're going to have to sweeten the deal even more to gain market share. They need to include full client-side networking support: TCP stacks, IPX, NFS support, and drivers for all the plug-in and PCMCIA network cards out there, and they need a killer installation routine. Look for OS/2 Warp Connect to address some of these issues.

Lastly, phone support is getting better, but the best place is still CompuServe's OS2SUPPORT Forum.

LOOKING AHEAD

Tell me what you love and hate about these products and we'll share the information in future issues.

Autodesk 3D Studio	Quickon for Windows
IBM ThinkPad 755CD	Vertisoft Remove-It
LANtastic for OS/2	Toshiba Portege T3600GT
Lotus Organizer 2.0	WordPerfect 6.1
PCMCIA modems	ZDS Z-NoteFlex

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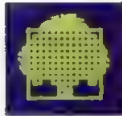
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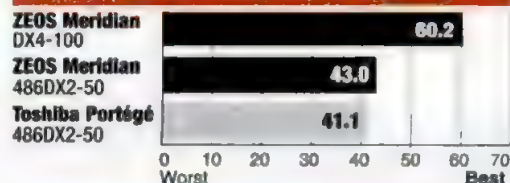


Unretouched screen photos

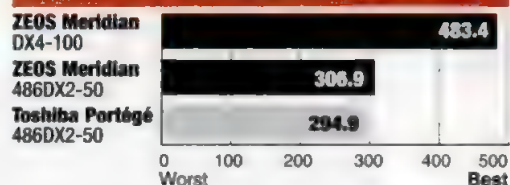
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DX4-100	\$3695	Not Available
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Memory	➤ 8MB, upgradable to 20MB	➤ 8MB, upgradable to 24MB
Floppy Drive	➤ External 3.5" floppy drive	➤ External 3.5" floppy drive
PCMCIA slots	➤ 2 Type II	➤ 1 Type II
Video	➤ 1MB local bus	➤ 1MB local bus
Screen	➤ 7.8" active color, .25mm dp	➤ 8.4" active color, .27mm dp
Keyboard	➤ 84-key w/embedded numeric keypad & 12-dedicated function keys, inverted "T"	➤ 82-key w/integrated numeric keypad & 12-dedicated function keys, inverted "T"
Pointing device	➤ Integrated TruePoint	➤ Integrated AccuPoint
Ports:		
Serial/Parallel	➤ 1 (16550 UART) / 1	➤ 1 (16450 UART) / 1
Mouse/Keyboard	➤ 1 for either	➤ Req. port replicator, \$239
Floppy drive	➤ 1 integrated	➤ 1 integrated
VGA video	➤ 1 integrated	➤ 1 RGB, req. adapter (included)
Battery	➤ Replaceable, rechargeable NiMH	➤ Replaceable, rechargeable Lithium-Ion
Software	➤ MS-DOS 6.2, WFW 3.11 Lotus Organizer	➤ MS-DOS 6.2, WFW 3.11 CommWorks™ for Windows, MaxTime, Fn-esse™
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ENT PCW 100/95



John C. Dvorak

Gambling on a PC Near You

There seems to be a worldwide gambling mania taking hold and you can bet that it's headed for your desktop. There is almost nothing to prevent the Internet from becoming a virtual Monte Carlo as gambling interests around the world aim

to separate you from your hard-earned money. Expect to be playing a slot machine right on your desktop, with nobody there to stop the action. Only well-informed users can prevent this from happening.

I've been concerned about the gaming mania, new lotteries, and Native American-sponsored casinos. I mean, even when you visit Las Vegas, you have to ask yourself where and when it will end. Somebody is making money and it isn't the gambler.

Then there's on-line gambling. Dozens of companies are working on it. The specter of out-of-control gaming on the Internet has the government regulators spooked. I would suspect that the Nevada gaming commission might be concerned too, since it keeps things honest at gaming tables statewide. Perhaps Nevada offers the last honest bet you'll be able to make. Bookmakers out of Mexico are already taking on-line bets for nearly any horse race run in the U.S. and worldwide. The client sets up an account in Mexico or passes along a credit card number and starts to bet. The taxes that would have normally been collected at racetracks or legal betting parlors in the U.S. for domestic purposes are now lost to Mexico or wherever the gamblers set up shop. The Internet is the network that makes this remote gambling possible.

I've been following this action since the weird arrest of Robert Thomas for having an alleged pornographic bulletin board service (BBS) in California. He was busted in Tennessee because the BBS was accessible over a Tennessee phone line. It didn't make much sense at first because Tennessee has plenty of X-rated BBSs. Jack Rickard, publisher of *Boardwatch Magazine*, which covers the BBS scene, confirmed this and gave me a list of BBSs in Tennessee at least as offensive as Thomas's BBS.

The entire Thomas incident was bizarre. He was first accused of running a child-porn BBS—a charge later dropped. I now assume the initial accusation was to keep the media from following the case, since most shy away from child-porn anything. Once all scrutiny was removed, Thomas could be quickly found guilty in what can best be described as a kangaroo-court scene that would make a good book. To make a long story short, the purpose of this interstate arrest was to set a legal precedent for all interstate activity done over a computer network. Authorities hope the result of this case (along with that of a parallel case against Thomas pending in the Utah courts) will be effective control of interstate banking, interstate sales tax collection for on-line mall activity, and interstate gambling for the purpose of collecting taxes (which authorities would like to ban outright).

Thomas can't figure out what hit him, and virtually nobody has written about or considered the implications of this case or the implications of on-line interstate gaming. Whatever is going on, it will have far-reaching repercussions as the global on-line community gets stifled by the states'-rights movement and local special-interest groups that want to promote their values or their tax-collection ideas. I don't for a minute believe that Thomas was busted for the good of the community. I also don't think that the bureaucrats care an iota about the potential damage that the gambling mania may have on the American culture.

This is a story about tax collection. I'd advise everyone to keep an eye on their money clip. If the gamblers don't get it, the tax man will. I hope we can keep gambling off the Internet and the tax-hungry government out of our collective wallet. I haven't much confidence, though, that either of my desires will be fulfilled.



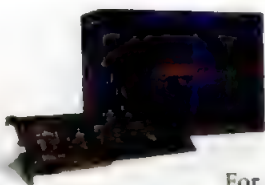
The specter of out-of-control gaming on the Internet has government regulators spooked.

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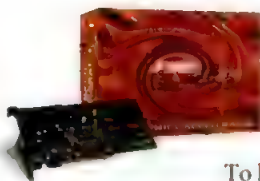
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Number Nine Imagine 128	1152 X 910	128-BIT	207
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Inside Track

Hard Disk Wars Dept.: If you haven't noticed, the price of a hard disk has fallen drastically. Insiders tell me that the fast gigabyte drive will be selling for \$299 by year's end and that the 540 drive will be the one found in those cheap low-end systems. By the end of the year nothing smaller will be in production. Now I suppose you can dub yourself an old-timer if you can recall the Shugart 5MB 5.25-inch hard disk that helped start the hard disk revolution. I remember being shown the disk drive and thinking how impressive its load time was. "Wow! And it holds an entire 5MB too!"

Here's a question for you: **Will Windows 95 kill the Internet?** That's what one industry-newsletter pundit **foolishly** claimed recently. For some odd reason he believes (as do other rubes) that just because Microsoft will have a button on Windows 95 to connect users to Microsoft's on-line service, the 'Net is dead. The Microsoft Network is coming into a market dominated by established companies (AOL, CIS, Prodigy) and a rich newcomer (AT&T), along with the Internet itself and 50,000 BBSes. I mean, let's be realistic. Can you spell *fat chance*?

The **fear** generated by Microsoft is a function of the single fact that Windows 95 will have the interface to The Microsoft Network built-in. One click and you're on-line, assuming you have a modem hooked up properly. The only effect this may have is to introduce people to on-line services and **expand the market** even more. The appeal of the Microsoft service will be limited from **internal fears** that will develop at the company limiting the service to minimal forums excessively **censored**. There are at least **four major court cases** in which **on-line services are being sued** for allowing a libelous posting to occur. Plaintiffs aren't suing the people making the comments, they are suing the services. While thus far the courts have sided with the defendants, saying they can't possibly monitor all the forums for such activity, **this may end when Microsoft enters the arena**. The argument is simple. "You're computer experts, aren't you? Can't you screen for this kind of thing? You are the biggest software company in the world, aren't you? You therefore have the resources to keep this from happening, don't you?"

Another aspect to the on-line world that is important is **on-line socialization**, which can be very risqué and includes the exchange of .GIFs and other photos through on-line services. Many of the photos are **pornograph-**

There are at least four major court cases in which on-line services are being sued for allowing a libelous posting to occur. Thus far the courts have sided with the defendants, but this may end when Microsoft enters the arena.

ic to the point of being illegal in many states. Microsoft cannot afford to be associated with, for example, a **pornography ring** that may infiltrate its service and use it as a nexus for exchange. Suddenly Microsoft is embroiled in a criminal action.

Finally, the most overlooked aspect is Microsoft's **pathetic track record** for on-line activity. The company has never been able to make a simple—let alone a complicated—telecommunications product. Years ago, a **miserable program** called Access was introduced (yes, since then the name has been used for the database product), and it was, by far, **worse than the most mediocre of shareware offerings**. Anyone

who had the misfortune of being stuck with Microsoft Works for DOS surely remembers that Microsoft took yet **another horrid attempt** at a telecommunications program in that product.

The fact is, like IBM, **Microsoft is insular** and not connected very well to the outside world. This is a technique used to keep its employees in an overworked, self-motivating siege mentality that keeps them focused on executive edict. Changing this would be **anathema**. The company will never understand the true nature of the Internet, BBSes, or on-line services. In fact, the company was even caught off guard by the quasi-on-line application Lotus Notes, and is still trying to figure that out. **This is Microsoft's obvious weakness**. It doesn't have any pieces of the puzzle: neither mail nor encryption nor telecommunications products. Microsoft even got aced recently when America Online bought the browser company that Microsoft was bidding for. **Aced! Not a good sign.**

Miscellaneous Complaints Dept.: This is a bit of advice for people who like to get plugs or mentions in this column or elsewhere. I'm amazed by the phenomenon of companies that use 800 numbers so customers can order a product or service. Although this may have been a **good idea 20 years ago** when toll-free numbers were important, these numbers are of dubious value and are sometimes counterproductive. Because of the international audience in today's society, if I use an 800 number in this column, for example, I get bitter complaints from around the world, since few 800 numbers are internationally accessible. Most companies give out an 800 number with no alternative because of marketing naïveté. **Think about it!** (I was going to close out this column with information on a new product, but the only number the company listed was an 800 number. And the office is closed.) □



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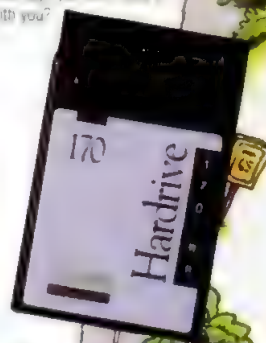
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CIRCLE 248 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Jim Seymour

The Changing Face of the Interface

There's a big difference between looks and effectiveness. In today's frenzied Interface Wars, that difference is looming large. The whole notion of interfaces—or *surfaces*, to use a term that was popular briefly in the late eighties—is being

reexamined now, especially in the wake of Microsoft's splashy preview of Bob, referred to as a "social interface," earlier this year.

Everyone has an opinion about Bob, and not to duck the issue, I do too. I think it's going to be a success for Microsoft, but it won't be particularly successful among the readership of *PC Magazine*. More on that in a minute.

The role of an interface is to give us access to the functions of a program, whether it be an operating system or an application. Good interfaces make access direct and easy to figure out; bad interfaces make access tedious and confusing.

Strong graphics can make the difference, but being pretty or different doesn't necessarily promote intuitiveness or ease of use.

DIFFERENT BUT DATED

The very different Macintosh interface, for example, is sometimes praised as a good graphical user interface, despite its age and general shabbiness. The Mac GUI was impressive a decade ago, but it's grown threadbare through too many cycles of patching and extension—as opposed to, say, improvement and evolution. The Mac interface today looks very much as it did in the mid-eighties, which means it looks passé to many eyes.

The arrival of OS/2 Warp, the pending arrival of Windows 95, and the debut of Bob have not only underscored how grizzled and feeble the Mac interface has become; they have focused a new round of attention on what makes for a good GUI.

Perhaps more important, new applications have appeared that largely or completely ignore the con-

ventions of the operating-system GUIs lying beneath them. These apps demonstrate that there are many other ways to run software.

Three software packages that illustrate new and different ways of doing things are Kai Krause's Kai's Power Tools (KPT) and the newer KPT Convolver—both from HSC Software—and Kitty Hawk's The Greatest Paper Airplanes (GPA).

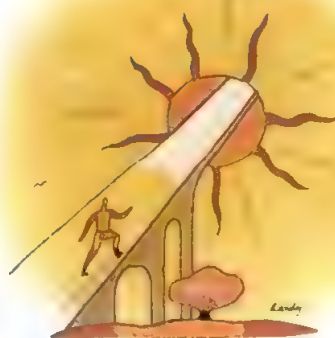
Aimed at the high-end graphic-design community, KPT had a great opportunity to demonstrate a truly graphical environment. It didn't disappoint. First on the Mac and now under Windows, KPT and KPT Convolver showed that code can coexist with menu bars and drop-downs without surrendering to them.

PC users seeing KPT for the first time are full of *wows*. As a friend of mine says, "There's a big 'Ahhh! factor' to a program like KPT," simply because it doesn't look like anything we've ever seen before.

Kai's interfaces are not only full of graphical zowies; they also show a good understanding of the dynamics of computer power. For example, images being massaged appear in relatively small viewing windows rather than full-screen; Kai's programs seem to run faster since the screen area they must redraw is smaller.

Kai's interfaces aren't hard to figure out, though how to make the most of them sometimes is. But as much as I like working with them and as important as they are to our evolving understanding of GUIs, it's sometimes a relief to return to a more conventional Windows interface after a session in KPT. Because for all their GUI sparseness, the interfaces of Windows and applications that look like Windows are familiar—no sunglasses needed.

The Greatest Paper Airplanes' GUI is vastly more



Good interfaces make access direct and easy to figure out; bad interfaces make access tedious and confusing.

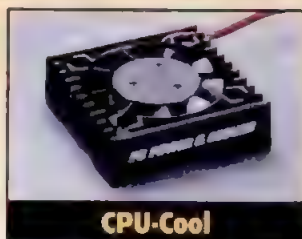
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CIRCLE 080 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Jim Seymour

bare-bones than KPT's interface but still very effective. A notebook metaphor (in a mediocre implementation that results in overly long screen redraws) presents a work-book of paper-airplane designs. Choose a category of planes and then choose the one you want to make. Print the sheet and you get to the glory of the program: an animated sequence that folds the sheet, step by step.

You can rock back and forth, as with a VCR control, to see steps over and over again. You can even set the program to play nonstop through the whole sequence of folds for a particular design.

GPA's interface is plain—even ugly—but it's highly effective: You can easily choose, print, and fold your plane as the interface walks you through these steps. Regular users of Kai's programs would blanch at GPA's bare, primitive screen, but they'd be able to create spiffy-looking pieces of flying origami quickly and easily. Kai's interfaces look worlds better but take some learning; GPA's interface will win no design awards, but it is as intuitive as any I've seen.

HI, BOB

Back to Bob. I was one of the early Bob beta testers, and I worked intermittently with the program over a long period. I grew to dislike its flat and unattractive room designs and odd mix of the mundane (applications boxes and titles) and the wanna-be slick (forced-perspective renderings of rooms that too often looked like old *Little Orphan Annie* cartoon panels).

Most important, I don't think the look of Bob is going to help many people use a computer. But there's more than just the visual at work here: You choose from among a menagerie of little agents and tutors—some with attitude with a capital A—who walk you through computer work. My guess is that these little characters are going to be a lot more appealing to new PC users than Bob's comic-book rooms will be. Indeed, I think Bob will succeed in spite of—not because of—its look.

Being beautiful helps but isn't enough; being different isn't necessarily a help at all. A new definition of interface design that's more exact than simply *graphical* is needed—one that specifies interfaces that actively help us use their underlying programs.

Therein lies the real future of PC interfaces. □



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Bill Howard

Grab These Bags

What's ideal in a laptop bag is in the eye of the beholder, but most would agree that rugged construction, protection, and an intelligent layout of compartments are key. Last issue, I told you what I'd like to see in a perfect laptop bag. Here are my

personal favorites from among the two dozen bags I've been carrying daily over the past several months. Except where noted, these bags are what I'd call medium size, about 16 by 12 inches, and made of nylon. If you want leather, expect to pay \$100 to \$150 more.

•**Best large bag:** The Tumi 85 Laptop Computer Brief (about 18 by 13 by 7 inches). Tumi luggage is breathtaking in most every respect: fit and finish, durability, and price, particularly if you buy in leather. On the other hand, you get what you pay for. PC Labs technical director Nick Stam has been carrying one daily for more than two years, and it looks almost new. I have three minor gripes: The front organizer pockets are unorganized and there aren't enough subpockets, there's no key ring inside, and there's no umbrella strap outside. If you're buying only one bag, the Tumi (in ballistic nylon) is nevertheless the one to get; it might very well outlast three cheap bags (\$295; 800-299-8864).

•**Best medium-size bag:** The Tumi 88 Organizer Notebook Brief (about 17 by 12 by 5 inches). At \$225, it holds less, but it's much better organized than its big brother. Also good are the Hartmann Modem EC503 (\$225; 615-444-5000) and the slightly smaller EC502 (\$215), as well as the Boyt LG318 Computer Brief (\$235; 515-648-4626).

•**Best sub-\$100 bags (selling price):** The Eddie Bauer Legal-Size Laptop Briefcase (\$90; 800-426-8020) and the L.L. Bean Laptop Computer Briefcase by Eagle Creek (\$95; 800-221-4221). Both are medium-size bags with lots of pockets.

The snap hook on the less padded L. L. Bean Sportsman's Briefcase (\$79) failed the first day, sending my \$4,000 notebook tumbling down to the asphalt (no damage, fortunately). The Lands' End Computer Attaché is huge (18 by 15 inches), stiff, and

completely unpadded, but it's well made and costs only \$65 (800-356-4444).

•**Most protective bag:** The Port Sport Classic (the bag that's sold with IBM ThinkPads). If you've ever lost a laptop to a fall, you'll want a Port bag, which suspends your notebook computer in a U-shaped neoprene sling. Drawbacks: The sling takes up space and the shoulder-strap adjuster can slip as you walk (\$159; 203-852-1102).

•**Best framed bag:** The large-size Samsonite Guardian Overnite Computer Case. It feels more like a 6-pound, soft-sided suitcase than a pliable shoulder bag, but it has room for a laptop, a daily planner, a small printer, and a change of clothes, as well as accordion pleats to swallow two dozen file folders (\$130; 303-373-2000).

Over the past two years, my two large CL-90 Premier Leather bags from sales-leader Targus have suffered two heart-wrenching snap-hook strap failures, two pocket-clasp failures, and premature wear. But every time I sent a bag back (anonymously), Targus dutifully sent a replacement. Leather Targus bags sell on the street for about half the cost (\$150) of a nylon Tumi bag (714-523-5429).

The Compucase C-1 Executive by Heritage Industries claims to be a Targus Premier replica, and it is: It too suffered a snap-hook failure (\$150 in leather; 210-377-2434). The Notebook Traveler Leather Carrier from Kensington is above average (\$266; 415-572-2700).

Domke bags, now manufactured by a different company, still carry the name of famed photo-bag creator, Jim Domke. Unlike the original Domke bag, the heavy-canvas Domke F-802 Reporter's Satchel (\$90) and F-805 Courier Satchel (\$160) aren't very well thought out. For instance, the shoulder strap is apparently meant only for 6-footers. A laptop-specific bag is due (716-328-7800). □



A good laptop bag must be rugged, protective, and strong—that includes the strap.

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Scan Freq.	H:30-86Hz, V:55-160Hz
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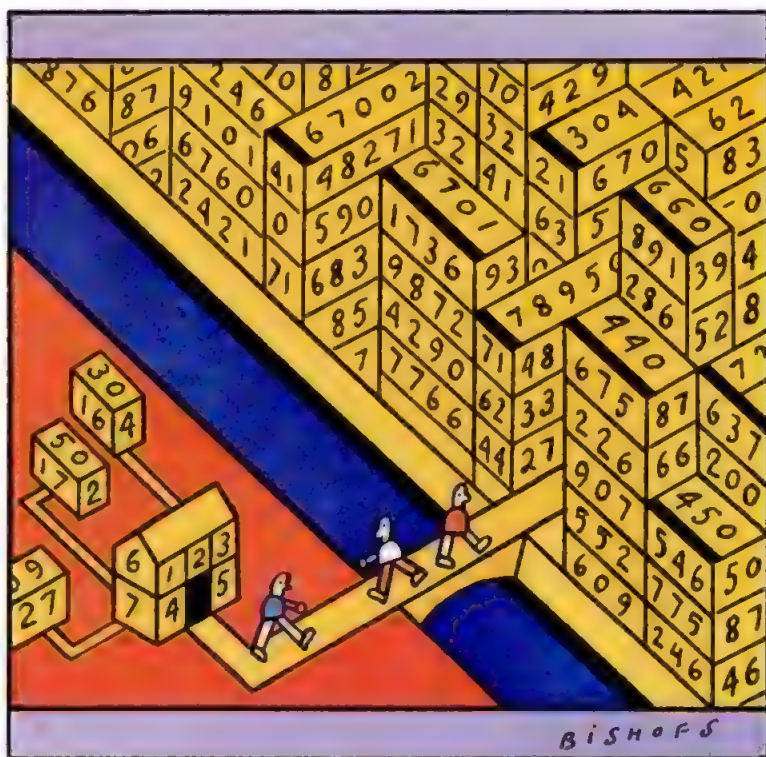
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NETWORK EDITION

COVER STORY

INTERNET SERVERS

Publish or Perish??



The time is ripe to make your company's products and services known on the Net.

By O. Ryan Tabibian

Succeeding in today's business world requires not only marketing and financial savvy, but also the will to use technology to broaden your potential market reach. In addition to joining a commercial on-line service, for example, even the smallest business can benefit from having a presence on the Internet—not just access to it, but a presence.



Who and where is your next customer? It could be someone out there on the Internet. Do you want to let your competitors make the first investments to

find out—while you sit back and see what happens? If not, take a look at our cover story about Internet servers here in Network Edition.

Here, *PC Magazine* senior technical analyst Ryan Tabibian looks at the nuts and bolts of four hardware/software solutions, collectively called Internet servers. These are intended as plug-and-play systems that sit on your LAN and provide Internet services.

But are they really plug-and-play? These *are* Unix systems, for the most part, after all. Some include Web authoring software, to turn your company into a Web site. We even put together our own home-brewed Internet servers and give you guidelines for putting one together yourself.

YOU SHOULD ALSO CHECK OUT

our related coverage further on in this issue. Several product groups are emerging as the Internet becomes more important to business. Start on page 195 with an overview called "The Internet Means Business." Our software team reviews several Web authoring packages, explains about setting up FTP, Gopher, and WAIS sites, and gives you recommendations on how to use Internet e-mail to greater advantage.

ON THE FAST ETHERNET FRONT,

things continue to roll. We've got a Network Edition First Looks review of 3Com's first 10/100 PCI Fast Ethernet board. See how easily it configured and how it performed against the Editors' Choice from our recent roundup ("New Reasons to Go Fast Ethernet," Network Edition, April 11, 1995).

—Gail Shaffer

Upgrade today to the only network operating system better than NetWare 3: NetWare 4.1.

The network. Your business depends on it. You keep it running. It's your baby. Well, what you're about to read will redefine networking. You'll see how the services in NetWare 4.1 define what a next generation network should be, and why it's so important that you upgrade today. The facts are right here in black and white. Please take ten minutes to read this ad. After all, isn't your business worth ten minutes of your time?

NetWare Directory Services. Access and view your entire network at a single glance.

The previous generation of networks only let you view the network one server at a time. They weren't exactly convenient. But with NetWare 4.1, it's different. You get a complete view of the network. It's the only network that allows users to login once and access any file, document or

resource for which they're authorized. Even better, administrators can manage the network from a single-point-of-administration. That means you avoid the hassle of managing your network server by server, managing it instead as a single entity.

Conveniences like these can save you a whole lot of time and money.

NetWare Messaging Services. The simplest way to manage your E:mail users.

In the past, messaging required a separate purchase, a separate installation, and a separate database. With NetWare 4.1, everything is a lot simpler. That's because integrated messaging built into NetWare 4.1 works with almost any E:mail front-end application. There's no additional mail software needed. And, it's integrated with NetWare Directory Services, so network and E:mail

administration can be accomplished through a single-point-of-administration. It's a lot simpler, and a lot easier.

NetWare Multiprotocol Routing. Get your data from point A to point B.

Getting connected to other networks usually means buying separate hardware. But with NetWare 4.1, multiprotocol routing comes built-in. And because NetWare's Multiprotocol Routing supports IPX, TCP/IP, Appletalk and others, it connects networks without the need for additional hardware. And not buying all that extra hardware can add up to big savings. And who could possibly be against big savings?

NetWare Network Management. Easily the most manageable network.

NetWare 4.1 offers unmatched management and administration

capabilities. For example, it allows you to take full control of any server from anywhere on the network. It also has a new graphical user interface that lets you manage the network as a single entity, instead of a collection of separate servers. So jobs that used to take hours can be accomplished in minutes. Plus, tasks like setting up users, granting security privileges and access to resources—tasks that were very time consuming with NetWare 3—aren't with NetWare 4.1. Click a few icons, then type information in a dialog box. You've just added another user to the entire network. It's quick and easy. Again—saving you time and money.

NetWare 4.1 Security Services. Simply the industry's most secure NOS.

One of the greatest concerns about any network operating system is how secure it is. NetWare 4.1 includes RSA security, the industry's most secure password encryption and digital packet signature technology. In fact, it was designed to meet the National Computer Security Center's Class C2 Network Security criteria. Look. If you can't afford to have confidential data in the wrong hands, that's reason enough to upgrade to NetWare 4.1 today.

NetWare 4.1 File Services. We just improved on perfection.

NetWare 4.1 shares the same industry leading file system as NetWare 3, except it also comes with terrific, industry leading enhancements. There's a server-based file compression feature that can double the size of the hard drive, leaving more room for data. And sub-allocation provides more efficient storage. It also provides optional large block sizes which speeds data transfer performance from hard drive to memory. And data migration reduces storage media costs by transparently migrating data to near-line or

off-line storage. You know, this is a great way to avoid having to shell out the big bucks for more space later.

NetWare 4.1 Print Services just got smarter.

With NetWare 4.1, you can say goodbye to printing nightmares for good. NetWare 4.1 provides the most robust set of print services in the industry. It's terrific. For example, you

7 Key Services	NetWare 4.1	NetWare 3
1 DIRECTORY Global directory service	YES	NO
2 INTEGRATED MESSAGING	YES	NO
3 MULTIPROTOCOL ROUTING	YES	Add-on product
4 NETWORK MANAGEMENT Graphical user tools provide view of entire network	YES	NO
5 NETWORK SECURITY RSA public/private key Restrict login to specific Mac address Security auditing	YES YES YES	NO NO NO
6 FILE SYSTEM AND STORAGE Support for data-migration hardware, data compression and disk block suballocation	YES	NO
7 NETWORK PRINTING	256 per print server	16 per print server
Additional Services		
● INTEGRATED SYSTEM FAULT TOLERANCE LEVEL III	YES*	Add-on product
● CLIENT SUPPORT AND INTEROPERABILITY NetWare for Macintosh, Number of user licenses included Graphical user tools	Included in NetWare user licenses YES	5 NO
● WAN SUPPORT Network Link Service Protocol™ (NLSP)™	YES	Add-on product
● ARCHITECTURE Maximum number of user connections per server Nondedicated server Single login to network Additive licensing	1,000 YES** YES YES	250 NO NO NO

don't need to know anything about the print server. All you need to know is the name of the printer and you're set. That's it. Plus, NetWare 4.1 Print Services maximize your hardware investment because it allows up to 256 printers to run off one server (as opposed to NetWare 3, which limits you to 16 printers). Just think how much time, money, and hours of frustration this could save you.

NetWare Return on Investment. It makes sense on your bottom line.

NetWare 4.1 has the lowest cost of ownership in the industry. In fact, the META Group reports NetWare 4.1 can cut 25%† from the cost of managing a network. Think of it. That means your NetWare 4.1 upgrade or new purchase will virtually pay for itself in no time. Here's a chance to make the accountants smile for once.

NetWare 4.1. All this and much, much more.

NetWare 4.1 also comes with everything you need to run your network on TCP/IP, so you can run IPX or TCP/IP throughout your network. It also has built-in support for your Macintosh users. And built-in System Fault Tolerance level III capabilities. (To activate this service, all you have to do is simply purchase a license disk and you can reduce the chances of network failure to almost zero. And because it's built-in, there's no need to reload your system).

Still, we know all these features wouldn't mean diddly if they didn't work right out of the box. So we submitted NetWare 4.1 to rigorous testing—first we tested it at Novell labs, then the press took a crack at it, and finally, our toughest customers got their chance. It passed with flying colors. Without a doubt, NetWare 4.1 is set to take center stage in the industry.

We hope we've told you enough to get things underway. But in case you need more information about NetWare 4.1, just call Novell at 1-800-844-6661 or dial us in at <http://www.netware.com>. We'll do everything we can to help.

 **NOVELL**

NetWare 4.1

The only network
ready for tomorrow, today.

But how do you get there? One way is to establish an Internet server on your network that offers a variety of Internet services. The early crop of Internet servers we review here—the BBN Internet Server; The Neticity Workstation, from IT Solutions; the WebForce, from Silicon Graphics Inc. (SGI); and the Netra i5 Internet Server, from Sun Microsystems Computer Co.—even go some distance to make the process painless. This marketing investment will cost you around \$8,000 to \$9,000.

These servers accomplish two specific tasks. First, they let you publish (that is, post publicly) and serve documents on the Internet for all of its users to access. Much of this is done on the Internet's World-Wide Web. Second, they provide the tools necessary to localize many Internet resources, such as e-mail, Network News Transfer Protocol (News, or NNTP), and Domain Name Service (DNS), that you normally would access over slow WAN links.

Getting onto the Net no longer requires learning archaic Unix commands or hiring consultants. Each of these servers is a bundled hardware/software solution. Each runs on some flavor of Unix (the standard-bearer OS of the Internet), but each also offers management tools that hide the complexities of Unix.

You can actually publish information about your company and its products and services. The Internet lets large and small businesses go global and tap into a potential customer base of 20 million users.

TWO KINDS OF SERVER

The four servers in this roundup represent two kinds of Internet server. The BBN Internet Server and the Netra are bundled solutions that offer multiple services, such as e-mail, DNS, a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) server, and News. The Neticity and WebForce are designed for a more focused solution: publishing and serving using the Hypertext Markup Language (HTML). Each combines an HTTP server with intuitive authoring tools that require no HTML coding and make creating Web home pages a breeze. To gain perspective, we also built our own plug-and-play Internet servers on standard PCs, one running NeXTStep 3.3 and one running Microsoft Windows NT 3.5 (see the sidebar "PC Magazine's Home-Brewed Internet Servers").

You should note, too, that these servers are not designed to deliver complete access to the Internet. In fact you don't even need them if you are looking just to pro-

Emerging Product Class

Although we prefer to designate an Editors' Choice in every comparative review we do, we always do so choosing from a pool of comparable products. In this emerging product class called

Internet servers, our criteria actually pulled together four new products that are different enough that we decided it was better to make recommendations to you about each. (New product categories are like this.) The four actually do break out into two groups of two like products each. So you should compare the like products head-to-head.

Businesses mainly looking to pick up a set of general Internet services can look to either the BBN Internet Server (which seemed the best in a general way) or the Netra i5 Internet Server, from Sun Microsystems Computer Co., and be happy with either. There are a few trade-offs. The BBN Server offers a reasonably easy installation on a Unix platform—and the Microsoft Windows

interface is due out by the time you read this. The Netra, however, is situated on a higher-performance platform and is a most encouraging attempt at a true plug-and-play server.

If you've decided you want HTML-Web-page authoring tools up front, either Silicon Graphics' WebForce or IT Solutions' Neticity Workstation will deliver. The WebForce shows its graphical heritage in its excellent authoring capabilities. Installation, however, was a bit rough. The Neticity, on the other hand, takes full advantage of the NeXTStep OS to offer ease of use and strong features, combined with good authoring tools. NeXTStep also clearly made a difference in ease of installation and configuration.



provide Internet access to only a few users in your organization. For that you need other tools, such as TCP/IP clients from Net-Manage or SPRY (among others), a connection to the Internet through an Internet Service Provider (ISP) such as Exodus (formerly NetUSA) or AlterNet, and a set of IP addresses, which can often be provided by your ISP (see "Making the Internet Connection," October 11, 1994).

To test the products we installed them in a multipatform, multiprotocol environment that consisted of HP Unix Workstations; Novell UnixWare, and NetWare file servers; and of course, Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Windows NT, and Macintosh clients. The network was connected to our local Internet provider, Exodus, through an Ascend ISDN router. We tested each product for the quality and functionality of the tools, ease of use, and management features.

We found the BBN Server to be the best all-around package: It included all the popular services such as DNS, e-mail, HTTP, and News in a single box. BBN's Mac-based management tool was a plus. The Netra offers many popular Internet services, but the bundle is not as complete as BBN's, lacking HTTP and News. Many

such tools are available free on the Internet, but why not just include them? The Netra also offers a menu-driven management tool that simplifies setting up services.

The Neticity and WebForce are both complete Web platforms. The Neticity comes preloaded with the NCSA HTTP server and an impressive object-based HTML authoring tool from Pages Software that helps create and publish HTML documents in a snap, making it the better authoring system of the two. The WebForce bundles the Netsite Communications Server with a good authoring tool, and it is the superior server.

WHAT YOUR SERVER LOOKS LIKE

Each of the servers in our roundup offered a mix of features and functionality that could fit any type of environment. Your choice will depend on the types of services you need, the OS and hardware platform you prefer, bandwidth needs, and security requirements.

First, what services do you need? Normally services such as DNS, e-mail, and News are run locally for better performance. While setting up e-mail is rather painless on both the BBN Server and the Netra, installing DNS and News can be

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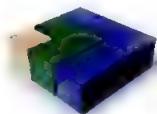
You know Ethernet is reaching its limits. You know Fast Ethernet could be the answer. But you aren't ready to implement Fast Ethernet in a significant way.

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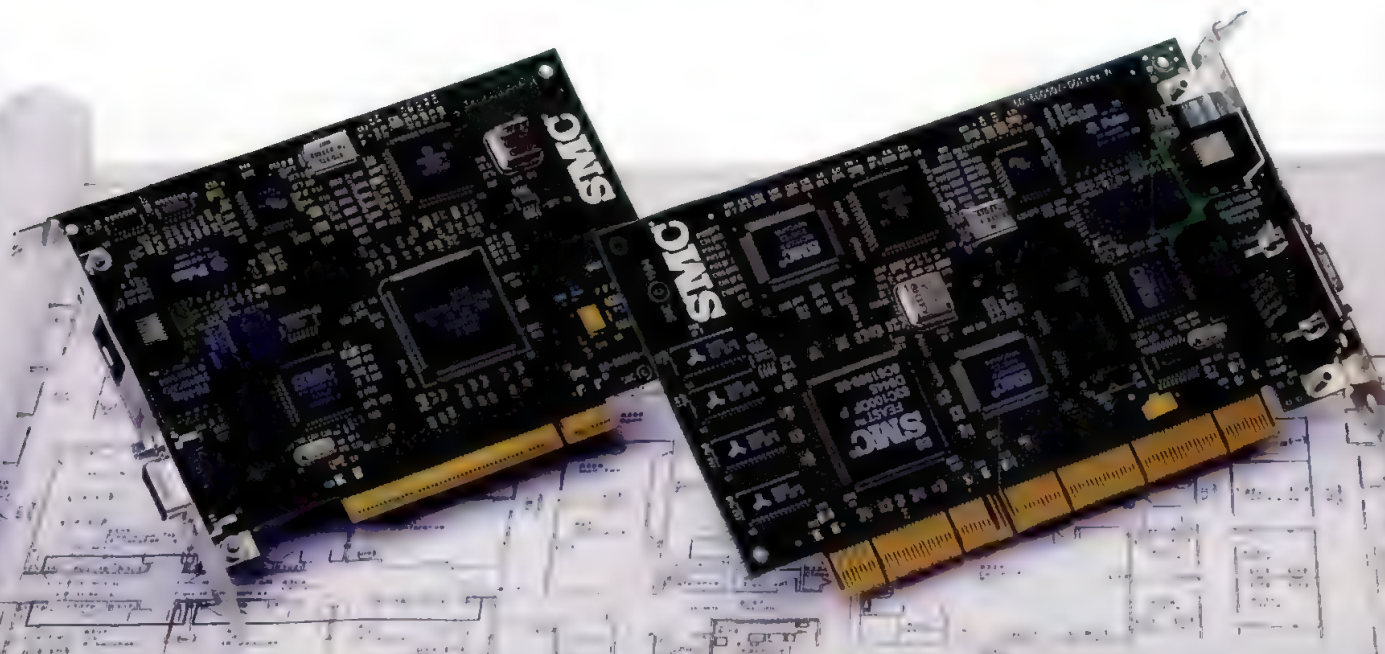
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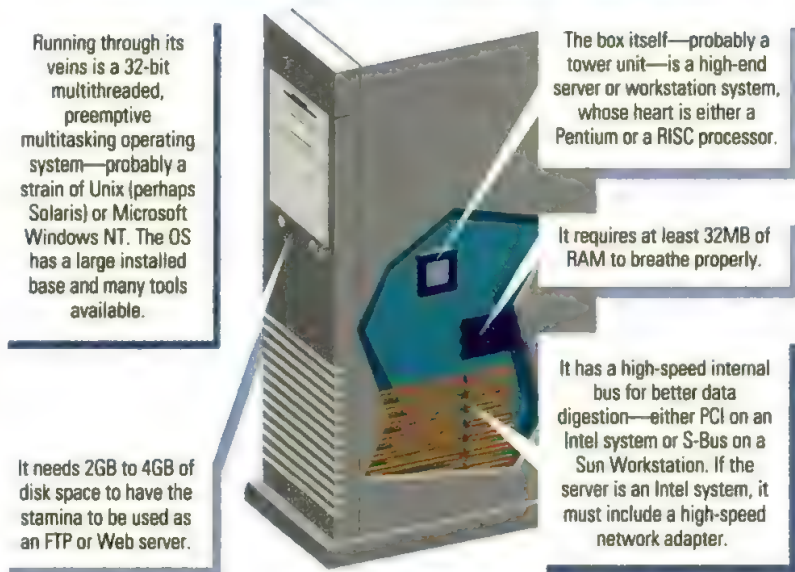
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ANATOMY OF AN INTERNET SERVER

Here's a look at the physiology of a server that can put your business on the Internet.



complicated. News, for example, requires gigabytes of disk space and a lot of manual configuration to various Unix files. Your best option for DNS is to create a caching DNS server, which learns the network routes from a primary server located with the ISP.

If your focus is setting up a Web server to publish documents, either the Neticity or the WebForce can make it a straightforward process. Both offer unbeatable intuitive HTML authoring tools on strong server systems. One difference is the hardware platform. The Neticity depends on a 486 PC, with its inherent limitations—slow bus speed and overall poor network performance compared with the WebForce.

If you're expecting a lot of hits on your Web server, you should consider the WebForce. For smaller sites, any of the products should be suitable. (You can also run the HTTP server on the BBN Server or the Netra, but neither offers the complete plug-and-play Web solution that the Neticity or Netra do.)

For your operating system, there's little choice in 32-bit OSs right now—beyond what flavor of Unix you prefer. Products will start to come on the market supporting Windows NT as well. But it will take time before the number of tools for Windows NT match the number for Unix.

The hardware platform should be robust, with a fast CPU, plenty of RAM, ample disk storage, and a high-speed bus.

An Internet server that offers a lot of content that includes graphics and sound, for example, should have at least 32MB of RAM, and will be best served by a platform, such as one of SGI's Indys or Sun's SPARCstations, which have a high-speed bus and plenty of processing power. Most PCs, even those with PCI buses, do not match the performance capabilities of the Sun or SGI boxes, especially under heavy I/O use.

For bandwidth needs, the two most popular methods are through a dial-up Point-to-Point Protocol (PPP) or a leased line. If you are planning an e-mail-only gateway, a PPP line should suffice. But for providing content through a Web Server, a 56K or better leased line is your only option.

Security is last on our list, but it should be far from least on your agenda. By con-

necting to the Internet, you expose yourself and your company to the hackers that run wild all over the Net. Thus, a decision on a security policy should be a priority. (See our sidebar "Security Alert.")

The potential importance of the Internet to your business is clear. With some planning and implementation you can be up and running in a matter of days. So what are you waiting for? It's only your bottom line.

BBN Internet Services Corp.

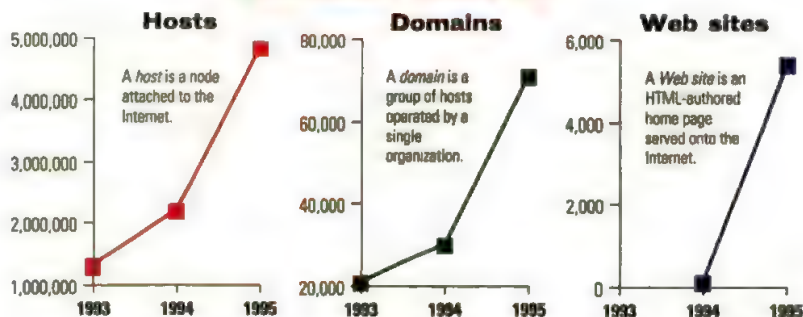
BBN Internet Server

This veteran Internet provider's foray into the bundled Internet server market is impressive. For years BBN Internet Services Corp. has been one of the largest Internet access providers. All that experience clearly is reflected in this server. It's a good choice for small to medium-size businesses.

The BBN Internet Server is a complete Pentium-based, plug-and-play Internet server that gathers a number of shareware software pieces, such as DNS, e-mail, HTTP, and News into an easy-to-use box. Although the \$9,850 price may seem steep, BBN bundles a shareware OS along with a bunch of tools (which are admittedly available free on the Internet). BBN also provides good management, integration, and ease of use.

Two steps are offered for managing the server. First, you can have BBN manage it remotely for the first year for the mandatory \$1,500 fee. The fee includes some initial configuration, such as creating users and configuring the network information. And you can do some of the management through an intuitive Mac-based utility called Frontdoor (a Windows version should be available by the time you read this). Frontdoor lets you add and delete users or local newsgroups and manage the Gopher and Web servers.

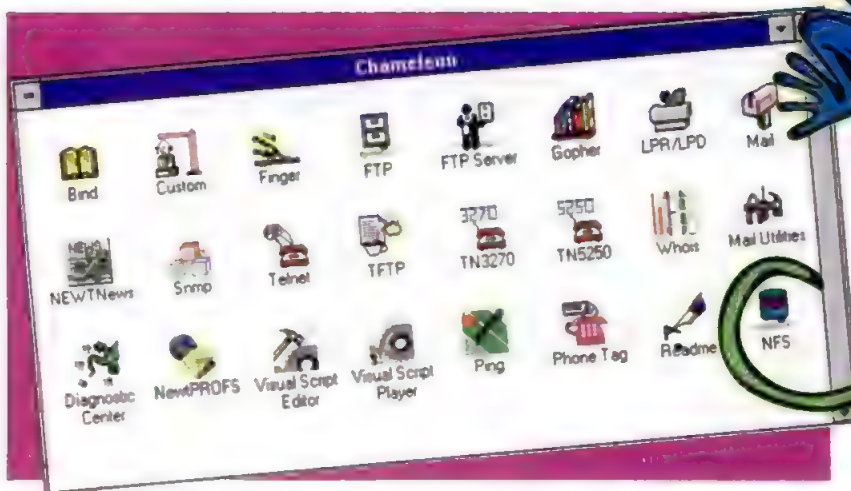
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PC Magazine's Home-Brewed Internet Servers

With the popularity of the Internet, it was bound to happen. Where vendors used to add a sound card to a PC and call it a *Multimedia PC*, today some add several integrated IP-based tools to a system and call it an *Internet Server*. The Internet has been providing many such tools—for free—for over 20 years.

At PC Magazine Labs, West Coast, we sniffed a challenge. So we set about to create our own Internet servers using tools available on the Net. With some patience and, admittedly, some Unix savvy, you too can create your own solution and save about \$3,000 in the process.

For the OS, we chose NeXTStep 3.3 for one server and Microsoft Windows NT 3.5 for another. NeXTStep is perhaps the most robust and intuitive Unix on the Intel platform. Windows NT offers many of Unix's architectural benefits. For services, we determined that an Internet server should offer DNS, e-mail, FTP, Gopher, HTTP, and News.

We began our search for services by posting anonymous messages to some NeXTStep-related newsgroups on the Internet. It also turns out that a few of the tools, such as DNS, e-mail, FTP, and telnet, are already built into NeXTStep. For Windows NT, some of the tools are available in the Windows NT 3.5 Resource Kit or through the Microsoft FTP site. We also used an impressive book called *Marketing Internet Information Services* (O'Reilly & Associates, 1994), which provides step-by-step instructions on setting up the services on any Unix system.

We had a tremendous response from the NeXTStep user community. Many messages suggested applications and told us where we could find them. From there, we downloaded the appropriate files and started brewing. Enabling required little Unix knowledge, thanks to NeXTStep's intuitive management tools.

On the other hand, installing and configuring other services required a bit of Unix know-how: We were able to find source code for a only couple. We had to compile the applications to run on NeXTStep. In the Unix world, compiling means that you have to run a Make file, which requires a C compiler to compile your source code. But NeXTStep 3.3 doesn't include a C compiler, so we had to install the NeXTStep Developer 3.2 to get one.

After some trial and error, we successfully compiled a Gopher and News server for our NeXTStep system. In addition we downloaded a precompiled binary file of the HTTP server from the CERN Web site.

Once all the tools were in place and successfully installed, the configuration of each service can be a straightforward process—if you are familiar with Unix configuration files.

Although we found some comprehensive instruction files with each service, figuring out how to publish information was rather complicated. We spent several hours shuffling through documentation and did some experimentation, but we eventually ended up with a complete Internet server.

WINDOWS NT COMES TO PLAY ON THE NET

For a while, Windows NT will have some limitations in both the number and availability of services. Unlike Unix-based OSs, Windows NT does not support any Internet services out of the box (except FTP). But early versions of the DNS, Gopher, and HTTP servers from EMWAC are available either with the Microsoft Windows NT Resource Kit 3.5 or from the Microsoft Web home page. Telnet and Internet mail servers for Windows NT are also available on the Web, but only from independent third-party sites.

Installing these services on the Windows NT server was much easier than our Unix installation. To install the tools we just dragged the appropriate files into the System folder and rebooted the server. We could configure all three tools—DNS, Gopher, and HTTP—through the control panel.

After going through some of the well-organized, intuitive documentation provided with each product, we had the DNS, FTP, Gopher, and HTTP server up and running in under an hour. We were impressed with the usability and functionality that the Windows NT Internet tools provide.

If you are unfamiliar with Unix and are only looking to offer a few services, Windows NT is a great choice.—ORT

COST COMPARISON

	BBN Internet Server	Netra i5 Internet Server	Home Brew on Microsoft Windows NT	Home Brew on NeXTStep
Operating system	Berkeley Unix	Solaris 2.4	Microsoft Windows NT 3.5 Server (\$800)	NeXTStep 3.3 (\$799)
Internet capabilities	DNS, HTTP, Internet mail, News	DNS, FTP, Internet mail	FTP built in; free DNS, Gopher, HTTP	DNS, Internet mail, telnet built-in; free Gopher, HTTP, News*
Hardware	Intel-based PC with 16MB of RAM and 500MB hard disk	SPARCstation 5 with 32MB of RAM and 1.05GB hard disk; no monitor or keyboard	Dell OmniPlex DX2/50 with 32MB of RAM and 1GB hard disk (\$4,900)	Dell OmniPlex DX2/50 with 32MB of RAM and 1GB hard disk (\$4,900)
Total cost (list)	\$9,850	\$8,499	\$5,700	\$5,699

* We had to compile the source code for Gopher, HTTP, and News with a NeXTStep C compiler. A compiler is available in NeXTStep Developer 3.2 (\$4,999).

WHERE TO GET IT

	Microsoft Windows NT 3.5 Server	NeXTStep 3.3
DNS	EMWAC DNS Server*	Built-in
FTP	Built-in	Built-in
Gopher	EMWAC Gopher Server**	Gopher (Gopher 2_1_3.tar.Z at ftp://boombox.micro.umn.edu/pub/gopher/Unix/)
News	EMWAC HTTP Server**	CERN HTTP Server (select <code>cern_httpd_3.0.tar.Z</code> at http://www.w3.org/pub/bin/next-386)
Internet mail	From third-party Web sites	Built-in
News	From third-party Web sites	INN (select <code>inn1.4sec.tar.Z</code> at ftp://ftp.uu.net/networking/news/nntp/inn/)
Telnet	From third-party Web sites	Built-in

* Available in Microsoft Windows NT 3.5 Resource Kit.

** Available in Microsoft Windows NT 3.5 Resource Kit or at <http://www.microsoft.com>.

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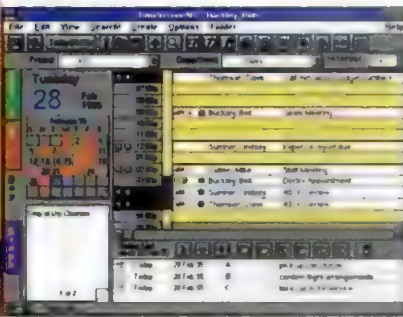
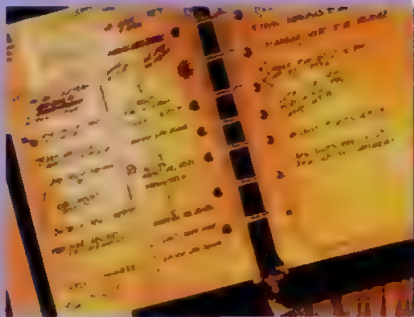
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This server's installation was simpler than the Netra i5 Internet Server's. And if you supply BBN with all the configuration information, such as network address and gateway information when you order, it will preconfigure the server prior to shipment. Then all you do is plug it in and you're up and running in minutes. In our case, we had to alter the IP configuration, which had changed since we had first supplied BBN with information. After a 15-minute phone call, our server was configured with the new information and ready to go.

BBN has attempted to provide a complete solution that includes every tool you'll need to set up Internet services, including DNS, e-mail, Gopher, HTTP, and News.

The level of management for these tools is mixed. Some (e-mail, for example) can be easily managed through Frontdoor; for others, however (Gopher, HTTP, and News), Frontdoor offers little support. If you're adding newsgroups, you must edit configuration files manually. This can be cumbersome if you're looking to add all 8,000 groups currently available on the Internet.

Nevertheless, the BBN solution is a good option overall for many businesses. But if you're looking for performance and scalability, you'll want to consider the Netra for its fast bus and potentially better performance.

BBN Internet Server. List price: \$9,850. BBN Internet Services Corp. (a Division of

Bolt Beranek and Newman Inc.), 150 Cambridge Park Dr., Cambridge, MA 02140; 800-472-4565; fax, 617-873-5620; Web, <http://www.bbnplanet.com/>.

Circle 952 on reader service card

IT Solutions

The Neticity Workstation

Here's a product that represents an interesting mix of vendors in an authoring and server system for the Web. IT Solutions' Neticity Workstation (developed in part by Canon, of "image is everything" fame), combines the NeXTStep OS with a specially designed Intel 486 PC that includes high-speed video and a VL-Bus for better overall performance. The Neticity includes the NCSA version of the HTTP server and an impressive object-oriented HTML authoring tool from Pages Software.

From an authoring perspective, Pages takes full advantage of NeXTStep, which itself offers a unique combination of Unix performance and scalability, along with its advanced object-oriented interface. This mix enhances not only usability, but the feature set as well. For example, Pages takes full advantage of NeXTStep's drag-and-drop capability for creating your pages. Pages also lets you easily import documents from popular word processors to your HTML document. The WebForce has only a rudimentary import facility. But like the WebForce, Pages offers a number of predefined templates for configuring your HTML documents.

For basic Web-server functionality, though, IT simply includes the NCSA HTTP software (also available free on the Internet). Although this makes the Neticity a functional Web server, management and configuration can be difficult if you are not familiar with Unix—compared to, say, the Netsite Communication Server on the WebForce. But the NCSA server is the most popular server running on the Web today and has proven over time to be robust and to perform well.

For installation and configuration, IT preconfigures all the software. But like the WebForce, the Neticity has no tools to automate the setup of the network portion of the server. This is where NeXTStep's GUI management environment comes in. In our testing, we had to do only two things: First, using the Simple Network Starter, we entered all the network information; second, because the Simple Network Starter does not offer an option for DNS, we manually had to create a resolv.conf file

Security Alert

With the movement of the Internet away from the halls of universities and government institutions and into corporate boardrooms, one thing has become clear. The Internet is not secure (at least not yet), and it poses a security risk for today's companies.

Stories about hackers breaking into everything from defense contractors' networks to Internet Service Providers' systems (to steal thousands of credit card numbers) are rampant. So how can you protect your LAN and your valuable data from the unscrupulous Internet intruders?

Security can come in a couple of different forms. You can use access control lists (ACLs) on your routers, which control access to your network, either by filtering on IP address or by defining TCP port numbers. Most seasoned hackers, however, have very little problem breaking through routers with ACLs. Instead, go for a *firewall*—probably the highest level of security that you can have today. Firewalls protect your LAN by filtering all network packets that cross your wires.

Firewalls are effective, but they come at a price. They are complex and require a thorough knowledge of network topologies, IP subnetting, and router-configuration parameters. Moreover, all firewall products, such as Firewall-1 from CheckPoint Software (distributed by SunSoft) and Borderware, from Border Network Technologies (formerly called Janus Firewall and distributed by Sea Change), should

be tools that you use to implement a carefully planned security policy. Without planning, it is too easy to make costly mistakes and cause more damage than good. (For example, you could easily cause all of your internal users to lose access to the outside world, while still leaving your network vulnerable.) In addition, many firewalls, including Firewall-1, require a high-end Unix workstation, such as a Sun SPARCstation, to operate.

There are generally two schools of thought on the type of protection firewalls can provide: port-level and application-level filtering. In port-level filtering, a firewall examines every packet header against its ACL. For example, in configuring the Firewall-1 software during some ad hoc testing, we had to specify the IP addresses of each host that was allowed to access the LAN. This method causes some latency in a network since the software has to check every packet that crosses the gateway.

Application-level filtering is considered more secure. It is also more complicated to configure and manage and has more overhead than port-level filtering products. In application-level filtering, the firewall authenticates every packet that goes through the network at the application level. This is a much higher level of security.

Whichever method of protection you choose, make sure that you have a well-thought-out security plan before purchasing any security tools.—ORT



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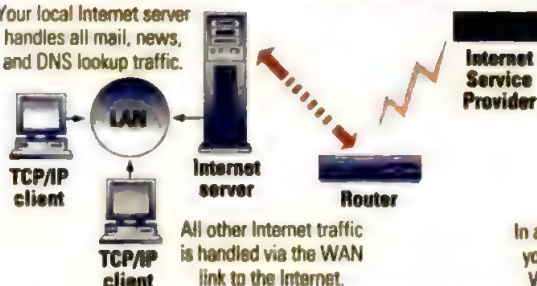
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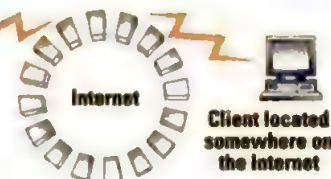
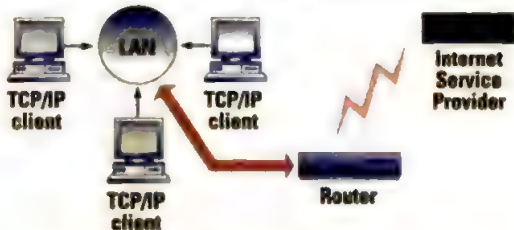
Your local Internet server handles all mail, news, and DNS lookup traffic.



In addition to giving your users access to the Internet, you can provide local services, such as World-Wide Web or anonymous FTP, to clients on the Internet.

Without Your Own Server

Under this scenario, all your services are provided by the Internet Service Provider, which maintains your e-mail gateway, and your DNS, HTTP, and News servers. The benefits are lower cost and easier setup, because you don't have to establish and maintain a local server. The drawbacks are that your users must access the services via slow WAN links, and you don't have private domains for your e-mail.



With this configuration you cannot provide local services to Internet users, but you can purchase space on the Internet provider's systems to offer Web pages or anonymous FTP.

that pointed to our DNS server. Even with all that, we were up and running in about a half hour.

The Neticity, with its excellent authoring tool and object-based OS, is a great solution for any size business that is looking to publish and serve HTML documents on the Web.

The Neticity Workstation. List price: With Web authoring system only, 24MB RAM, and 500MB SCSI hard disk, \$7,000; Professional System with 32MB RAM, 1GB SCSI hard disk, CD-ROM drive, and HTTP server, \$8,595. IT Solutions, 500 W. Madison St., #2210, Chicago, IL 60661; 800-394-4487; fax, 312-479-9361; Web, <http://www.its.com/>.

Circle 953 on reader service card

Silicon Graphics Inc.

WebForce

Another veteran of other computer markets offers up an entry in this one. Silicon Graphics Inc. (SGI) has been producing powerful graphics and server platforms for a number of years. With the introduction of WebForce, SGI combines the strengths of those platforms to offer a complete Web server and HTML authoring station that makes creating and serving HTML documents a snap.

The server portion of the WebForce is the Netsite Communications Server software, from Netscape Communications Corp. The authoring tool is based on source code licensed from another company, but SGI has enhanced it substantially. SGI combines the two tools over an object-oriented platform running on IRIX (a strain of Unix) and fast hardware. You can drag and drop graphics when you're creating Web pages, then serve those pages over the Internet—all from the same platform.

Installing and configuring the WebForce was relatively straightforward. The product came to us preconfigured with all the necessary software, but configuring the network was a bit more complicated than with the other servers. Familiarity with IRIX would help. SGI offers no configuration tools beyond what the OS offers. We had to resort to calling SGI support to resolve our configuration issues.

Once you correctly configure the network portion of the WebForce, management of the Web server is simple. The server software starts automatically during start-up, and most of the management takes place through the Netsite software. Then you're set to begin creating HTML pages.

For this undertaking, SGI offers an ex-

cellent authoring tool that lets you create attractive HTML documents combined with graphics, sound, and movie clips—without needing to know HTML codes. A set of intuitive tools lets you create headlines, insert images, and size fonts easily. The product also includes a number of predefined templates, or styles, that make creating attractive documents simple.

The process of creating documents is, however, more difficult than with the Pages software on the Neticity Workstation. For example, Pages offers a complete drag-and-drop solution, and even automatically indexes the files in a single directory. This is something not found with the SGI authoring tool.

Overall, the combination of the powerful WebForce platform with the excellent authoring tool makes this product an attractive buy if you're looking for a complete Web solution.

WebForce. List price: with 8-bit color, 32MB RAM and 1GB hard disk, \$10,995; with 24-bit color, 32MB RAM and 1GB hard disk, \$17,495; with high-end 3-D authoring, 128MB RAM, and 2GB hard disk, \$45,200. Silicon Graphics Inc., 2011 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View, CA 94943-1389; 800-800-7441; fax, 415-961-0595; Web, <http://www.sgi.com/>.

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Sun Microsystems Computer Co.

Netra i5 Internet Server

It's not often that we run into real "firsts" at *PC Magazine*, but here's one. The Netra i5 Internet Server not only doesn't support a monitor or keyboard, but it uses prerecorded voices (in the language of your choice) to inform you of the server's status.

Overall, Sun Microsystems Computer Co. has the right idea with the Netra. It's a real move toward a plug-and-play server that tries to provide only the basic services you need. Still, it lacks some things a small to medium-size business would need—such as a News server or an HTTP server. Sun says it will be adding more basic services in its next release, slated for the middle of 1995.

The Netra is a preconfigured SPARCstation 5 workstation running Solaris 2.4, loaded with DNS, e-mail, and FTP services. Most management takes place through the serial port, but Sun doesn't

provide the \$10 null modem cable required to connect a terminal to the Netra. We had to experiment with eight different cables before we found the one that worked. This should change.

When we turned on the system a female voice told us that our server was not configured. From that point we had two options: Provide our network information to Sun (or our ISP) so it could create a floppy disk to configure the server automatically, or use the included manual configuration utility.

At our labs we decided to test the manual configuration. The application for entering all your network information, such as IP address, DNS host information, and gateway address, is menu-driven. This tool was an excellent alternative to entering the information manually in the Unix configuration files. We were up and running in less than 15 minutes.

Once installation is complete, all management of the server takes place through an intuitive, though buggy utility called iadmin, which lets you add and delete

users, create mail accounts, and change configuration information. Some of the Netra's bugs are annoying, though. For example, it could not correctly back up our configuration information to floppy disk.

In the Netra, Sun delivers an impressive solution that has a few shortcomings in this iteration. Granted, a number of the missing tools—such as a News server or an HTTP server—are available on the Internet, but you still would need to configure all the necessary files manually. This is a complex process if you are unfamiliar with Unix commands. Still, the Netra will be a good solution for many businesses looking for basic services.

Netra i5 Internet Server. List price: With 16MB RAM and 535MB hard disk, \$6,149; with 32MB RAM and 1.05GB hard disk, \$8,499. Sun Microsystems Computer Co. (a Sun Microsystems Inc. Business), 2550 Garcia Ave., Mountain View, CA 94043; 800-821-4643; fax, 415-969-9131; Web, <http://www.sun.com>.

Circle 955 on reader service card

GLOSSARY

Internet Server Terms

Authoring tool Software that creates an *HTML* document for publication on the *World-Wide Web*

Daemon A program that runs in the background on a *Unix* workstation, waiting to handle requests. Examples include e-mail programs, print spoolers, router software, and schedulers that initiate other programs at specified times. A daemon is similar to a TSR in the DOS world

DNS Domain Name Service, a means by which numeric IP addresses are converted into character-based names and vice versa

Firewall Software that restricts traffic to a particular area of a network by filtering all IP packets that pass through a given node

FTP File Transfer Protocol, the protocol that defines the transfer of files between a host and a remote station on an IP-based network

Gopher A simple *TCP/IP* tool that allows you to organize and display information within a hierarchical menu system

HTML Hypertext Markup Language, a scripting language that is used to write *World-Wide Web* documents. Hypertext allows a document to be linked to an unlimited number of other documents on the Web. There are currently four levels of HTML compliance that adhere to the *SGML* standard

HTTP Hypertext Transfer Protocol; the protocol that is used to transfer data to and from *World-Wide Web* browsers

HTTP server A machine that makes a *World-Wide Web* document available to Internet users

ISP Internet Service Provider, a commercial company that offers individual access to the Internet

Leased line A telephone line rented for dedicated access to the Internet

Network News Transfer Protocol (News, or NNTP) A *TCP/IP* protocol that defines how newsgroup messages are posted and transported between services

PPP Point-to-Point Protocol, the protocol that allows a machine to connect to the Internet via a standard phone line and a high-speed modem

SGML Standard Generalized Markup Language, a standard for defining and managing the structure of digital documents. SGML separates a document into three components: the header file, which specifies how the document is to be run on a given system, the document type definition (DTD), which describes the layout of the document's components; and the instance, which contains the actual text. *HTML* is a subset of this standard

SMTP Simple Mail Transfer Protocol; the protocol that defines the transfer of e-mail between nodes on an IP-based network

TCP/IP Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol; a collection of communication protocols that allow dissimilar PCs to speak to one another over a common network. It was originally developed by the U.S. Department of Defense in the 1970s

Telnet A terminal emulation protocol that allows an Internet user to log on to other stations remotely; also, a program based on this protocol

Unix A multithreaded, multitasking operating system that was originally developed by AT&T in the late 1960s. There are many strains or versions of Unix. Much of the Internet was established on Unix systems, and Unix is still often used as a base for large-scale Internet access

WAIS Wide Area Information Service, a search engine that can look up information on the Internet according to keywords

World-Wide Web (the Web, or WWW)

A *TCP/IP*-based network of multimedia documents that are connected via hypertext links. All documents are authored using *HTML*

—Cade Metz



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First Looks

HANDS-ON REVIEWS OF NEW SHIPPING PRODUCTS

GROUPWARE

Manage More than Your Contacts

By Tony Pompili

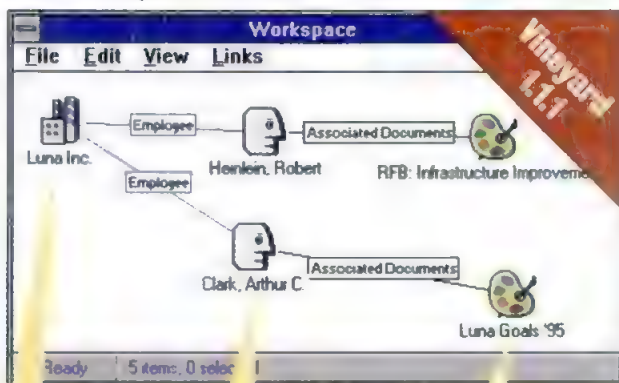
Data Fellows' new Vineyard, Version 1.1.1, is designed to help simplify the daunting task of managing and organizing files, documents, and contact information. While the friendly interface makes Vineyard an easy-to-use solution for small networks, the product does not scale well, making it a poor choice for larger LANs. Also, Vineyard is somewhat pricey (\$2,700 for 10 users) and does not work with MAPI or VIM mail systems.

Vineyard can be used to track a variety of information about your contacts, such as company and employee names, using visual mapping tools and a friendly drag-and-drop interface. Unlike a basic PIM, however, Vineyard can also organize documents, including word-processor, spreadsheet and presentation-graphics files.

Each piece of information—or object—is categorized as one of the following: person, company, user, user group, memo, spreadsheet, or external document. Folders contain groups of related objects, such as all the entries pertaining to a particular company. You can view each folder as a name list or as a group of icons. The latter, like the product in general, have a strong Macintosh look and feel.

Within folders, you can link objects to an unlimited number of similar objects using forms and Vineyard's Connection feature. For example, to link an employee to a company, you highlight the employee's name then drag and drop it to the company form's Connection

box. A special folder—called a link view—also lets you create links simply by drawing lines between two objects. Once links



TRACING THE VINE: Associations between Vineyard objects can be displayed with icons, lines, and link labels.

are established, you can use them to move through related information by simply mouse-clicking on successive objects.

Any Vineyard user with write access (provided by the administrator) can add new folders to the network. Folder properties, such as rights to read, write, or delete objects and folder names, can be created or changed via the Information tool on each user's menu bar. Each individual user also has a Workspace folder, which allows the user to customize the desktop.

Vineyard includes built-in word-processing and spreadsheet applets (Memo and Spreadsheet), but these are included only for convenience. Fortunately, you can track and create object links using documents from most popular third-party applications.

When opening an object or ac-

cessing a link, Vineyard users must be connected to a shared directory on a common file server. The product isn't tied to any particular network OS, but it does require that all of a server's users be set up with identical drive mappings to the same file server in order to share information.

time. This is not well suited, for example, to environments where the sales department needs to use one database and the research department another. Also, there is no way to connect multiple servers via WAN or dial-up links. While you can have multiple servers running different Vineyard databases, all users of a particular database must share the same Vineyard server and file server. Also, the package does not include any remote-user support.

As a workgroup communications program, Vineyard also falls short since it does not tie into existing e-mail systems like cc:Mail or Microsoft Mail. An e-mail applet is included with Vineyard, but since it does not work with MAPI or VIM, Vineyard users either have to use the applet exclusively or run two different mail systems.

Vineyard, Version 1.1.1. List price: For 10 users, \$2,700; for 25 users, \$5,800; for 50 users, \$10,500. Data Fellows Inc., 1616 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View, CA 94043; 415-694-7150; fax, 415-694-7070.

Circle 951 on reader service card

While useful for smaller groups, Vineyard simply is not a viable solution for enterprise networks. For one thing, only one database can be active on a Vineyard server at any given

PEER-TO-PEER NETWORKING

A Four-Star Bundle from Artisoft

By Steve Rigney

As your network grows, so does your need for tools that provide remote access, storage management, modem sharing, and overall network management. But a pile of separate software tools to perform these jobs can easily run in excess of \$1,000—a rather steep price, especially for small peer-to-peer LANs.

Enter the Artisoft LANtastic Utility Pack (\$349), which solves this problem for LAN-

tastic users. The LANtastic Utility Pack is a bundle of four utilities: ArtiSave backup software, Microcom Carbon Copy for Windows remote-control software, LANtastic Management Services (LMS) Basic, and ArtiCom for network modem sharing. Purchased separately, these products would cost more than \$700.

This bundle is a great way to add features and capabilities to your LANtastic network. The

Continues on page NE20

First Looks

Artisoft

Continued from page NE19
only thing we feel could be improved is the installation, which is disjointed. Each utility has a separate installation routine, and there is no integrated process for installing all the utilities from a common menu. Still, for the price, the LANtastic Utility Pack is hard to beat—even if you use only two or three of the utilities. And if you need more features than this product provides, you can separately purchase add-ons for ArtiSave and LMS.

WHO'S GOT THE REMOTE?

The most useful component in the LANtastic Utility Pack is Carbon Copy. You can use this package to dial into your LANtastic network from a remote location and take control of a network client or file server. As with any remote-control package, Carbon Copy lets you launch applications, send e-mail, and troubleshoot common network errors once you're connected to the network. Carbon Copy provides its own security in the form of user names and passwords, and it also implements LANtastic's

built-in security when you're connected.

While most users will use Carbon Copy only to dial into the network, you can also use this package to set up a gateway for dial-out service to your LANtastic network. You can configure the Carbon Copy gateway to allow users to dial out across the network using any DOS- or Windows-based communication package that works with the NetWare Communications Server Interface (NCSI) modem-sharing specification, a common capability in modern programs. If your remote PC does not run Windows, you will have to fork over an additional \$40 to purchase Carbon Copy for DOS. Or you could use a different DOS-based remote-control package, such as Symantec's pcAnywhere, to connect to your network.

WE GOT YOUR BACK

The ArtiSave utility lets you back up all your LANtastic servers—except those running over OS/2—to a single quarter-inch cartridge (QIC) tape backup device attached to a server or a client PC. We found ArtiSave very similar to Symantec's

LANtastic UTILITY PACK

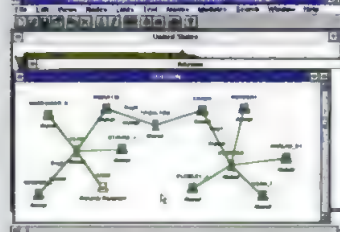
◀ **WHAT A BARGAIN**
For around \$350, you get Carbon Copy for remote control...



... **ArtiSave** for multiserver backups ... ▶



◀ ... and **LMS Basic** for network mapping and management, plus **ArtiCom** for modem sharing.



Norton Backup for Windows: easy to use and efficient.

You'll need to be careful about one detail, however. Most QIC tape backup devices, such as the Colorado Jumbo 250, allow you to back up only about 300MB of data. Even on small networks, you (and your users) won't take long to exceed this amount of data. If you need more data capacity or want to use a high-end DAT drive, you'll need to go with ArtiSave for SCSI (\$50).

SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE

ArtiCom, a DOS-based modem-sharing utility, lets you dial out from any client PC using a modem connected to a LANtastic server. This configuration is great if you don't want to install individual modems and phone lines for each PC on the network, but you must use a communication program that works with interrupt 14 (INT14) in order to access the shared modem. This should not cause too many problems, though, because most comm packages now support INT14.

ArtiCom works with up to 32 modems connected to a single

server. The utility also provides a DOS-based terminal program that you can use for basic dial-up needs.

ONE-STOP MANAGEMENT

The LMS utility allows you to monitor every PC on your network. You can create a graphical map of your entire network and view a wealth of information, including connection status, available disk space, and even some network performance statistics. LMS is not nearly as advanced as Visisoft's Visinet and other network-mapping and -management products, but it does the job and does it well.

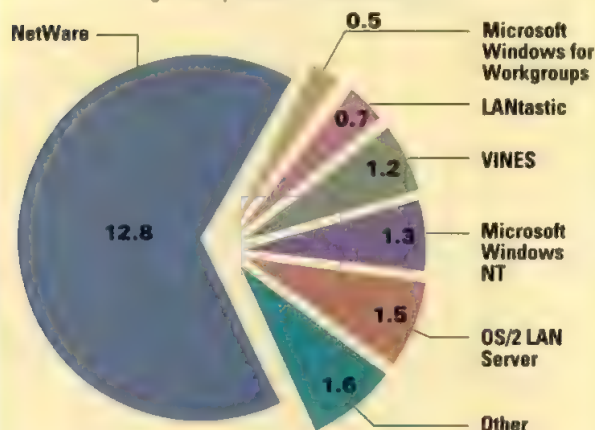
The Basic version of LMS is included in the LANtastic Utility Pack, but you can upgrade to the LMS/Advanced utility (\$399), which adds hardware and software inventory features as well as several customization features and support for DDE.

LANtastic Utility Pack. List price: \$349. Artisoft Inc., 2202 N. Forbes Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85745; 800-233-5564; fax, 602-670-7101.

Circle 969 on reader service card

NETWORK NODES INSTALLED IN 1994

NetWare is still the big boy on the block, but LANtastic is gaining a significant presence in the NOS market.*



*All figures are in millions

Source: International Data Corp.

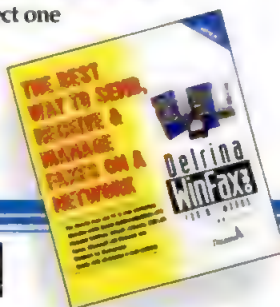


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New Delrina WinFax PRO for Networks 4.0

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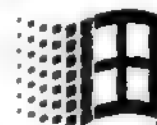


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First Looks

FAST ETHERNET

Raising the Stakes

By Charles Lin and Russell Iwanchuk

3Com Corp. has officially entered the Fast Ethernet market and is challenging other vendors with high performance and innovative technology. The 3Com Fast EtherLink PCI 10/100 Parallel Tasking Adapter (\$285) offers many advanced features and compares well with the other 100Base-TX PCI adapters we've seen to date; it even outperformed Intel's EtherExpress PRO/100 PCI—the Editors' Choice in our Fast Ethernet adapter roundup two issues ago—on most of our throughput tests. But despite its high performance, the Fast EtherLink's CPU utilization was higher than that of the PRO/100.

There's more to the Fast EtherLink than performance and CPU utilization, however. Like other 10/100 adapters we've seen, this card uses auto-sensing to switch automatically between 10Base-T and 100Base-TX networks. Auto-sensing is an excellent feature if you are planning to upgrade to 100 Mbps in the future, since it allows you to install Fast Ethernet adapters prior to changing the network entirely to 100 Mbps.

Also, the Fast EtherLink provides 3Com's Parallel Tasking technology. Like the 3Com EtherLink III Model 3C509, one of the highest-performing and most efficient 10-Mbps Ethernet cards on the market, the Fast EtherLink uses Parallel Tasking to increase perfor-

mance by sending packets to the PC bus without waiting to receive the entire packet.

Finally, the Fast EtherLink can utilize either programmed I/O or bus-mastering techniques when communicating with the PC bus. For traffic comprising mostly small packets, programmed I/O, the default method by which NICs pass data to the PC's system memory, will deliver the highest throughput. On the other hand, bus mastering reduces the burden on the system CPU, especially when the card handles large packets. One important note: The Fast EtherLink will work even in non-bus-mastered PCI slots; other Fast Ethernet cards cannot. 3Com backs this claim with a money-back guarantee.

IN PRACTICE

Installation was easy. It was easier, in fact, than you'd expect from a typical 10Base-T

adapter: As a PCI card, the Fast EtherLink raises no interrupt-conflict issues. The adapter shipped with a full suite of NetWare LAN and ODI drivers, as well as NDIS 2.0 drivers.

On our 16-client test-bed, the Fast EtherLink ran neck and neck with the PRO/100 and delivered almost 80-Mbps throughput when configured as the server adapter. This impressive showing was marred somewhat by poor CPU utilization, however.

As a client card, the Fast EtherLink consistently outperformed the PRO/100—but not by much.

3Com Fast EtherLink PCI 10/100 Parallel Tasking Adapter. List price: Single adapter, \$285; five pack, \$275 per adapter. 3Com Corp., 5400 Bayfront Plaza, P.O. Box 58145, Santa Clara, CA 95052-8145; 800-638-3266.

Circle 967 on reader service card

BENCHMARK TESTS

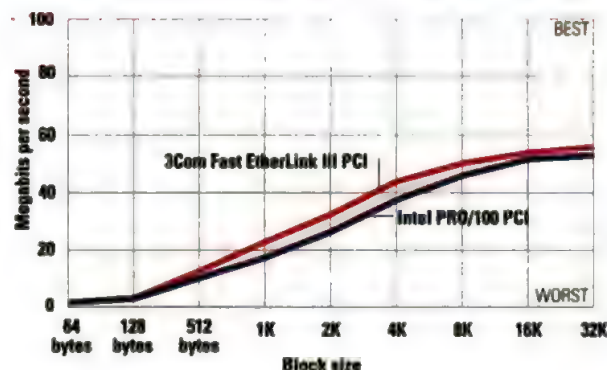
Fast Ethernet Adapters



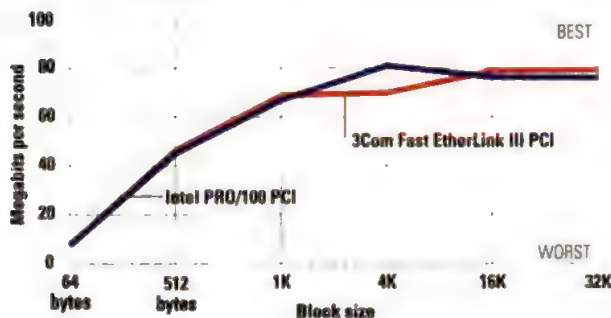
We ran the 3Com Fast EtherLink III PCI and Intel PRO/100 PCI through the NIC Throughput test from NetBench 3.0. Thanks primarily to its Parallel Tasking architecture, the Fast EtherLink outperformed the PRO/100 as a client card with every block size—but only by the slimmest of margins.

Both adapters performed well as server cards, and neither showed a clear throughput advantage. But the inefficiency of the Fast EtherLink became apparent on our CPU Utilization test, conducted using Novell's STAT.NLM. Although both cards started out high (over 70 percent utilization), the PRO/100's numbers improved steadily and dramatically with larger block sizes.

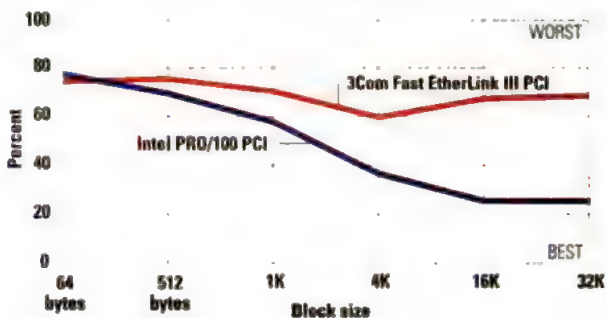
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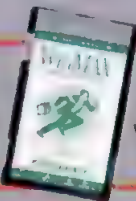
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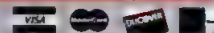
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M17

First Looks

UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLY

HP Enters the UPS Market

By Steve Buehler

Hewlett-Packard's name has long been associated with quality; LaserJet printers, Vectra desktop PCs, and NetServer servers from HP have all been recent *PC Magazine* Editors' Choice winners. Now HP is moving into the uninterruptible power supply (UPS) market with its new HP PowerWise line.

Only time will tell whether HP's presence in the UPS market will be as significant as it is in others. One thing is certain: The HP PowerWise is not going to revolutionize the UPS industry.

The PowerWise is available in two versions: a 1,000-volt-

ampere model for a single server (\$1,099) and a 2,100-va model for either two 486 servers or a minicomputer (\$1,799). The PowerWise competes directly with APC's BackUPS and SmartUPS, but without APC's wide selection of power ranges and add-on products.

AIMING AT BUSINESS USERS

Targeted straight at the corporate and small-business markets, the PowerWise and its management software answer most of today's UPS and power management requirements. Together, the rack-mountable PowerWise and the HP PowerWise Power Management soft-

ware offer line conditioning to eliminate spikes and surges, power backup in case of a utility-company failure, and the ability to add runtime modules. In addition to all that, you can plug SNMP management cards into your PowerWise.

Apart from providing tight management integration with the OpenView network management platform, however, the PowerWise does not break any price or feature barriers in the industry. Additionally, the first PowerWise models fill only a small part of a complete line of power management solutions. Pricing is steep; slightly more powerful units from APC list for \$200 less. HP claims this is justified, because its use of on-line power technology (compared with APC's line-interactive technology) puts less strain on the server during power outages.

The PowerWise and PowerWise Power Management software support NetWare, Microsoft Windows NT, OS/2 LAN Server, LAN Manager, SCO Unix, HP-UX, AIX, Solaris, and UnixWare. PowerWise Assistant monitors load and run times, and the UPS offers a very short recharge time, which is important if your power goes out frequently and for extended periods of time.

HP PowerWise. List price: With 1,000 va, \$1,099; with 2,100 va, \$1,799; external battery pack, \$399; SNMP card (10Base-T), \$499; SNMP card (10Base-T and ThinLAN), \$699; HP Power Management Software, \$99; rack-mount shelf, \$149. Hewlett-Packard Co., 150 Green Pond Rd., Rockaway, NJ 07866; 800-533-1333; fax, 201-586-5800.

Circle 968 on reader service card

THE NETWORKER By Diane Danielle

Help for Network Managers



When I give a seminar, I always ask the attendees if they have a CompuServe or Internet account. The percentage of people who now say yes has gone up, but I am amazed at how many still support networks without access to on-line resources. On such services you can find patches, fixes, technical information, shareware, and advice from others trying to solve similar problems. I never buy or install a new product or upgrade without checking on-line to see how things are going for those who've gone before.

In addition to the commercial services, many vendors have their own BBSs and fax-back services—some unfortunately with 900 numbers. Although fax-back services focus on sales literature and product specs, I encourage you to investigate your vendors' services.

It was during just such browsing that I discovered, to my delight, that Seagate's BBS carries diagrams and specs for all of its hard disks. Indeed, one of my criteria now when I buy hardware is the availability of complete specs on-line.

In addition to on-line services, and books of course, several CD-ROMs are worth a look. If you spend much time doing product research, consider Computer Select, from Computer Library. It has the past 12 months of articles on computer topics, hardware and software specs, and company profiles. But it isn't perfect. Although Select has the full text of articles from

a variety of publications (including all of Ziff's), for many it includes only abstracts. It is also expensive (\$1,250 per year for standalone). If you just want a fast way to wade through 6 months of computer publications to find that article you remember reading, it's less expensive to use CompuServe, where Select is available on ZiffNet at a surcharge.

Computer Library also offers two other CD-ROMs: Support on Site for Applications and Support on Site for Networks. These help you solve technical problems. The idea is good: You have a problem, you describe the symptoms, you locate a solution. The search engines, however, are weak.

Microsoft and Novell offer their own CD-ROMs. Microsoft's TechNet is \$295 per year; Novell's NSEPRO is \$1,395 per year (for CNEs, it's \$767). Much of the information in NSEPRO is available on CompuServe or Novell's Web site, a potentially less expensive solution. Both CDs contain documentation, sales material, support information, technical documentation, patches, and fixes. The subscription includes monthly updates. These, too, are easier to browse than to search.

I'll state this as unequivocally as I can: If you support a network, get on-line! If your choice is CompuServe, get Tapcis or Ozcis to automate your on-line sessions. You'll save a lot of money. If you have a Microsoft shop, get TechNet. If you have a Novell shop, check out the CompuServe or Internet resources first. (My recommendation would be different if NSEPRO were less expensive.) Whatever you choose, it's a good idea to learn how to find the answers to different technical problems—before an emergency strikes and you're desperate for those answers.

Diane Danielle, an independent networking consultant, can be reached on CompuServe at 72241,2566 or MCI Mail at 383-1159.



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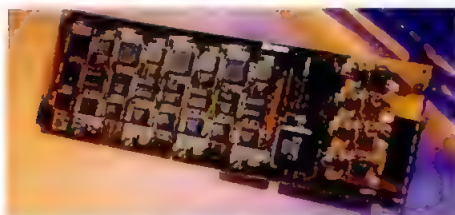
New & Improved

NEWS OF ANNOUNCED PRODUCTS AND UPGRADES

By Leslie Wygant

Xircom's Netaccess Keeps It All Inside

Attention, V.34 modem users: You don't need to worry about bulky external modems with the Netaccess Multiport Modem Card, Xircom's initial offering in its Netaccess remote-access product line. The Multiport Modem, which works with NetWare Connect and Microsoft Windows NT Server, includes multiple V.34 modems on a single card. You can manage the card from an SNMP console and use Xircom's included diagnostic software.



NO MORE BULKY MODEMS: Xircom puts the modem inside its Netaccess Multiport Modem Card.

Netaccess Multiport Modem Card. List price: For four ports, \$3,499; for eight ports, \$6,499. Xircom Inc., 2300 Corporate Center Dr., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320; 800-438-4526.

Circle 957 on reader service card

DAX 3.0 Lets You Talk, Look, and Listen

Imagine developing integrated voice, fax, and modem applications that run with one command and can be used with a variety of third-party products. Ram Research makes this possible with DAX 3.0, its applications development software for integrated communications systems. In addition to the many boards DAX has worked with in the past, Version 3.0 adds support for Talking Technologies and Pika voice boards, Dialogic and Hayes fax boards, and AT-compatible modems. A version of DAX (called DUET) is available for the Macintosh.

DAX 3.0. List price: DAX Developer's Edition for four phone lines, \$595. Ram Research, 1920 Monument Blvd., #533, Concord, CA 94520; 510-603-1122; BBS, 510-603-1126.

Circle 958 on reader service card



FastStack Offers a Family of Hubs

Do you want to migrate to high-speed technologies without rebuilding your entire network? You can bring 100 Mbps to your existing network with NetWorth's FastStack integrated hub family. The FastStack products, which are scheduled to be available in June, include the FastPipes Ethernet switching hub, the 100Base-T FastStack hub, and the 10Base-T FastStack hub. Each offers a redundant power supply, RMON capabilities, and security. The FastPipes Ethernet switching hub includes six 10-Mbps ports and one modular 100-Mbps high-speed port that has FDDI, 100Base-TX, 100Base-T4, 100VG-AnyLAN, and ATM capabilities.

The 100-Mbps FastStack hub also offers Smart Uplink. This optional daughterboard makes migrating to 100 Mbps easier by letting you place a FastStack hub into any existing 10Base-T configuration without requiring you to change your cabling.

Other news: NetWorth plans to phase out its use of 10/100 boards from Intel and to introduce its own 10/100 adapters.

NetWorth FastStack family. List price: FastPipes, \$3,995 and up; 100Base-T FastStack, \$1,995 and up; 10Base-T FastStack, \$995 and up. NetWorth Inc., 8404 Esters Blvd., Irving, TX 75063; 800-544-5255.

Circle 956 on reader service card

FAXserve 3.0 Offers Fax That You Can Count On

In addition to letting you send and receive faxes from your PC via DOS, Windows, e-mail, or other communications applications, Cheyenne Software's FAXserve 3.0 offers runtime NetWare and NDS integration. Cheyenne's newest release of its fax solution sports a new GUI based on Cheyenne's BitWare program and includes Windows-based management software. Compatibility with other products has expanded to include fax boards from Brooktrout, Gamalink, and Intel.

FAXserve 3.0. List price: \$595 and up; free upgrades for those who purchased FAXserve 2.0 after February 14, 1995. Cheyenne Software Inc., 3 Expressway Plaza, Roslyn Heights, NY 11577; 800-243-9462.

Circle 961 on reader service card

Go Everywhere with ISDN Remote Access

For ISDN remote access to your enterprise network and the Internet, check out Combinet's Everywhere 2000 family of multiprotocol routers. These fully integrated solutions, which start at under \$1,000, connect remote users to a LAN or the Internet at speeds of up to 512 Kbps via ISDN BRI (basic-rate interface). The



IT'S ALL THERE: Combinet's Everywhere 2000 routers offer you remote access.

Everywhere 2000 products include IP and IPX routing over PPP, SNMP management, security, and on-demand dialing.

Everywhere 2000 SOHO. List price: \$999. **Everywhere 2000.** List price: \$1,299. Internal NT1 (for either router), \$200. Combinet Inc., 333 El Camino Real, Sunnyvale, CA 94087; 800-967-6651.

Circle 959 on reader service card

Communicate from Afar With Oracle Office 2.1

Communication is a key factor in business, and in today's mobile world methods of communication such as messaging and scheduling can make or break you. **Oracle Office 2.1** boasts enterprise-wide client/server software for seamless, scalable communications among local and remote users. Office 2.1's client software lets users of both Windows and Macintosh systems communicate while away from the network. As far as scheduling, you can share your calendar with others and set up meetings. Office 2.1, which is built on Oracle7, works on over 25 platforms, including NetWare, VMS, and several flavors of Unix. It also lets you access the Internet and existing e-mail systems.

Oracle Office 2.1. List price: \$150 per user, with an eight-user minimum. Oracle Corp., 500 Oracle Pkwy., Box 659308, Redwood Shores, CA 94065; 800-633-0596; Web, <http://WWW.oracle.com/>.

Circle 960 on reader service card

BRIEFS

SOFTWARE

In a joint effort, **Software Interfaces (SI)** and **Hewlett-Packard Co. (HP)** announce the integration of SI's ProReports, for client/server database warehouse reporting, with HP's Intelligent Warehouse. With ProReports, you can combine queries from a variety of databases into one report, giving you greater flexibility. The integration of these two products allows you to schedule to run a report on a server instead of using a client. This decreases your network load by freeing up the client to perform other tasks. You can also print large reports on heavy-duty printers attached to the server. ProReports starts at \$695 for the client side and \$10,000 for the server side. Software Interfaces, 713-492-0707. Hewlett-Packard Co., 800-637-7740

Get a Boost from LANbooster 5000

Switches provide a solution to improve busy, overworked networks. But choosing a switch isn't an easy task; you need to examine a product's flexibility, throughput, cost, and interoperability. **ONET Data Communication Technologies**, with a focus on throughput and flexibility, has announced the **ONET LANbooster 5000** switching hub, which includes MetaSwitching, its ASIC (application-specific integrated circuit) non-blocking cell architecture to provide guaranteed throughput, fixed latency, and low-cost data transfer. ONET's complete family of Ethernet switches, including the LANbooster 5000, provides solutions for 10-, 20-, and 100-Mbps connections. ONET is scheduled to offer a FDDI-to-Ethernet/Full-Duplex Ethernet switching module for the LANbooster 5000 in June.

ONET LANbooster 5000. List price: With 4 slots and 48 ports, \$42,960. **ONET Data Communication Technologies**, 124 Mount Auburn St., Cambridge, MA 01238; 617-576-5759.

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TeamTalk 2.0 for Talking Now and Later

Lots of times when you use your network for discussions, too many people contribute and the discussion turns chaotic and difficult to follow. **Trax Softworks** has added threaded discussions and user-access permissions to TeamTalk 2.0 to make it easier for you to organize conversations both in real time and historically. TeamTalk 2.0 also lets you keep a member list for each topic; members are notified when comments are added. You can choose to be notified of updates, perform searches, and insert graphics via OLE 2.0. Remote users can also access TeamTalk. You can use TeamTalk with Microsoft Windows 3.1, Microsoft Windows NT, and IBM's OS/2 operating systems.

TeamTalk 2.0. List price: For five users, \$395; for additional users, \$61 to \$79 per user; upgrades, \$21 to \$27 per user. Trax Softworks Inc., 5840 Uplander Way, Culver City, CA 90230-6620; 800-367-8729; e-mail, info@traxsoft.com. Circle 964 on reader service card

BRIEFS

SOFTWARE

If you want to share CD-ROM drives and multimedia applications on your network, take a look at **Reed Technology and Information Services'** (formerly Online Computer Systems) Opti-Net 4 (\$795 for eight users) and Opti-Net NLM 4 (\$1,495 for 100 users). Reed Technology and Information Services offers you an alternative to adding CD-ROM drives to each PC on your network. Opti-Net 4 works with Microsoft Windows and DOS and turns a networked PC into a CD-ROM optical server under IPX/SPX or a NetBIOS-compatible network. Opti-Net NLM 4, which also works with Windows and DOS, lets users share CD-ROM and multimedia applications on a NetWare file server. 800-922-9204.

Fiery for Color Printing

Electronics for Imaging (EFI) believes that two things have held back color printers from replacing black-and-white printers: speed and cost.

To lower costs and accelerate processing speeds, EFI developed the



HEAT IT UP:
You can manage color printing with EFI's Fiery XJ servers.

Fiery XJ family of color servers by combining hardware (Rip-Chips, to off-load functions from the main CPU) and software (Rip-While-Print, to print while processing, and Continuous Print, to eliminate delays between print jobs) onto one board.

EFI Fiery XJ170. List price: \$16,995. **EFI Fiery XJ300.** \$32,995. Electronics for Imaging Inc., 2855 Campus Dr., San Mateo, CA 94403; 800-285-4565.

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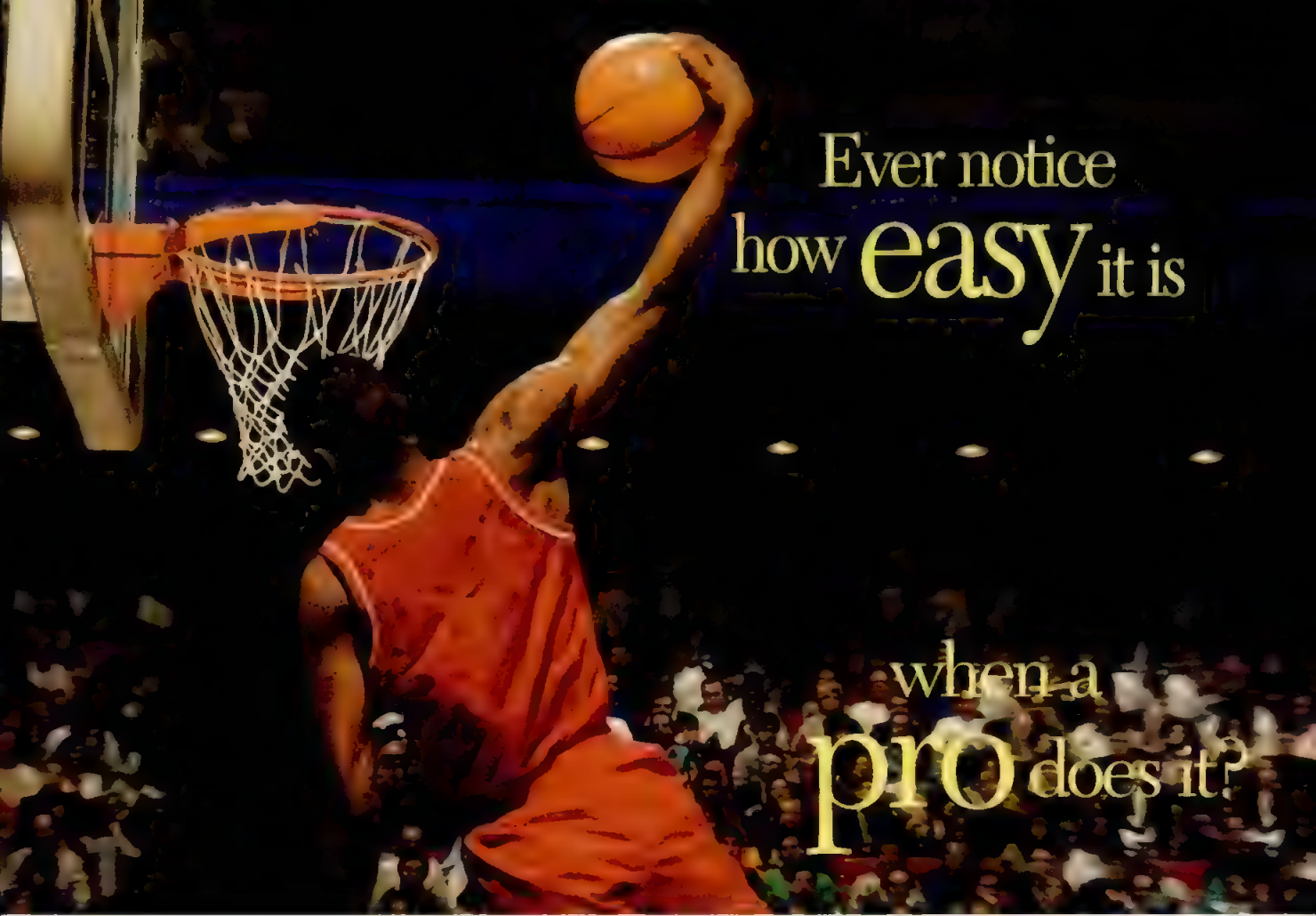
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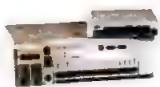
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PC Watchdog Keeps A Lookout

Even if you need to keep your PC running 24 hours a day, you probably don't want to sit by and monitor it in case something goes wrong. You can still have a life with **Berkshire Products'** PC Watchdog. This system-monitoring board restarts malfunctioning PCs and notifies you of problems. A temperature gauge option is also available that trips an alarm if the PC heats up above 110 degrees Fahrenheit. Berkshire designed PC Watchdog with the following environments in mind: BBS services, file servers, voice mail systems, and industrial control.

PC Watchdog. List price: Without temperature monitoring, \$144.95; with temperature monitoring, \$159.95. Berkshire Products, 2180 Pleasant Hill Rd., Suite A-5185, Duluth, GA 30136; 404-271-0088.

Circle 966 on reader service card

BRIEFS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Efforts to protect network data from disasters lag far behind the increased growth of and reliance on LANs, according to **Comdisco** and **Palindrome's** 1995 Vulnerability Index. Comdisco and Palindrome interviewed 300 of the biggest U.S. computer companies and found that companies need backup and off-site data-storage procedures to allow business to proceed even after a disaster occurs. According to the Index, financial services companies are best prepared for network disruption. To receive a copy of the 1995 Vulnerability Index findings or a Vulnerability Index self-assessment, call 800-272-9792.

LAN Inventory Tracks Your LAN Assets

Keeping track of hardware and software on your network isn't an easy task, and inventory applications are a welcome sight for network administrators. **McAfee Associates** has announced LAN Inventory 3.2, which works with Compaq's Intelligent Manageability Strategy for simplified LAN-asset management. LAN Inventory 3.2 runs on NetWare 3.x and 4.x local area networks and recognizes flawed Intel Pentium chips.

LAN Inventory 3.2. List price: For two-year subscription (including free updates and support), \$10 per node for 50 nodes to \$8 per node for 1,000 nodes; upgrades for current LAN Inventory customers are free. McAfee Associates Inc., 2710 Walsh Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95051-0963; 800-866-6585; 408-988-3832.

Circle 965 on reader service card

MULTIPLE ACCESS By Frank Derfler

OS/2 Warp Connect



I don't understand the high emotion behind the anti-Microsoft movement. I'm suspicious of the motives behind the Microsoft flaming, because I think companies should compete by fielding better technology and better marketing instead of through judicial, regulatory, or emotional maneuvering.

Fortunately for the industry, Microsoft will face some dandy technical competition in the networking arena in the second half of 1995. Those who rely on networks for a living can test new interoperable and economical LAN options on their own desktops before football starts again.

We've filled the pages of this issue with the good and bad about Windows 95—including its networking prowess. But don't think that Microsoft is the only one offering networking flexibility, interoperability, and style. IBM's OS/2 Warp Connect (OS/2 Warp with lots of networking built-in) is scheduled to hit the streets before Windows 95. Several members of the *PC Magazine* Network Edition team are running the Warp Connect beta and we like it.

So go slowly with your Windows 95 plans. I think every network manager in the world should run a test-bed of both Windows 95 and OS/2 Warp Connect for a while. It's not a big hardware investment, and you'll know a lot more when you let them go head-to-head right on your desktop.

What does OS/2 Warp Connect do for networking? Darn near everything! For starters, it comes on four CD-ROMs—they didn't leave much out. One service, IBM Peer for OS/2, gives you

client and server capabilities that interoperate with other Warp Connect, IBM OS/2 LAN Server, Windows for Workgroups, and Windows NT clients and servers. The mind boggles at the permutations. There's also a service called NetWare Client for OS/2 (they haven't mentioned a server for NetWare clients yet). IBM's TCP/IP stack for OS/2, shipped with an Internet Access Kit, handles communications with the rest of the world.

The networking utilities in OS/2 Warp Connect include Network SignOn Coordinator, a help database, and LAN Distance Remote. SignOn holds all your log-on names and passwords and sends them out to the various services. The help database does word searches of FAQs, setup guides, and descriptions of known problems. LAN Distance Remote is a client for a LAN Distance Server and works through a modem to another Warp Connect package.

The buzzword for the second half of '95 is flexibility, but that comes at a price. I'm not a fan of networks running multiple protocols, because I've found that increases your problems and costs exponentially, but both OS/2 Warp Connect and Windows 95 make it easy to turn on IP, IPX, and NetBIOS at the same time. Once you launch the software for these protocols, routing, security, and management is up to you. I prefer solutions like Performance Tech-

nology's Instant Internet that keep a solid firewall between different protocol worlds, but the new OSs provide the capability to shape the network any way you want.

If you don't want to change your entire OS to get networking flexibility, remember that PowerLAN and LANtastic are each excellent client programs for servers running Microsoft networking software or NetWare. □



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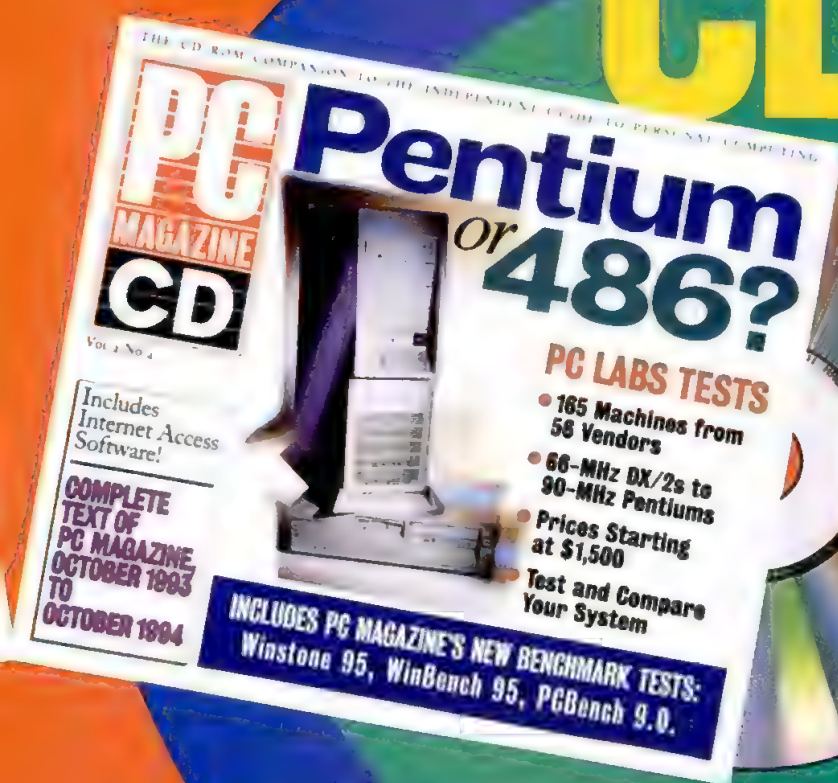
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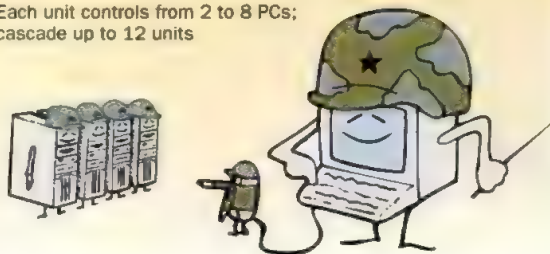
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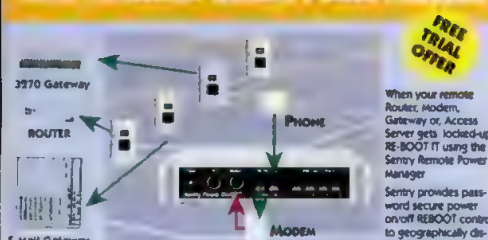
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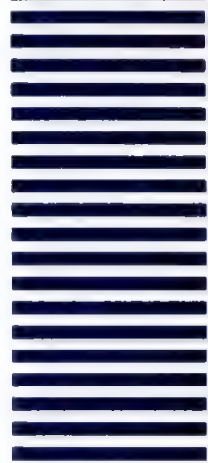
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1 MY COMPUTER offers instant pathways to drives, printers, the Control Panel, and the Dial-Up Networking utility.

2 FIND can search for files by name, size, date, and content.

3 NETWORK NEIGHBORHOOD outlines your network, integrating LANs and WANs with local resources.

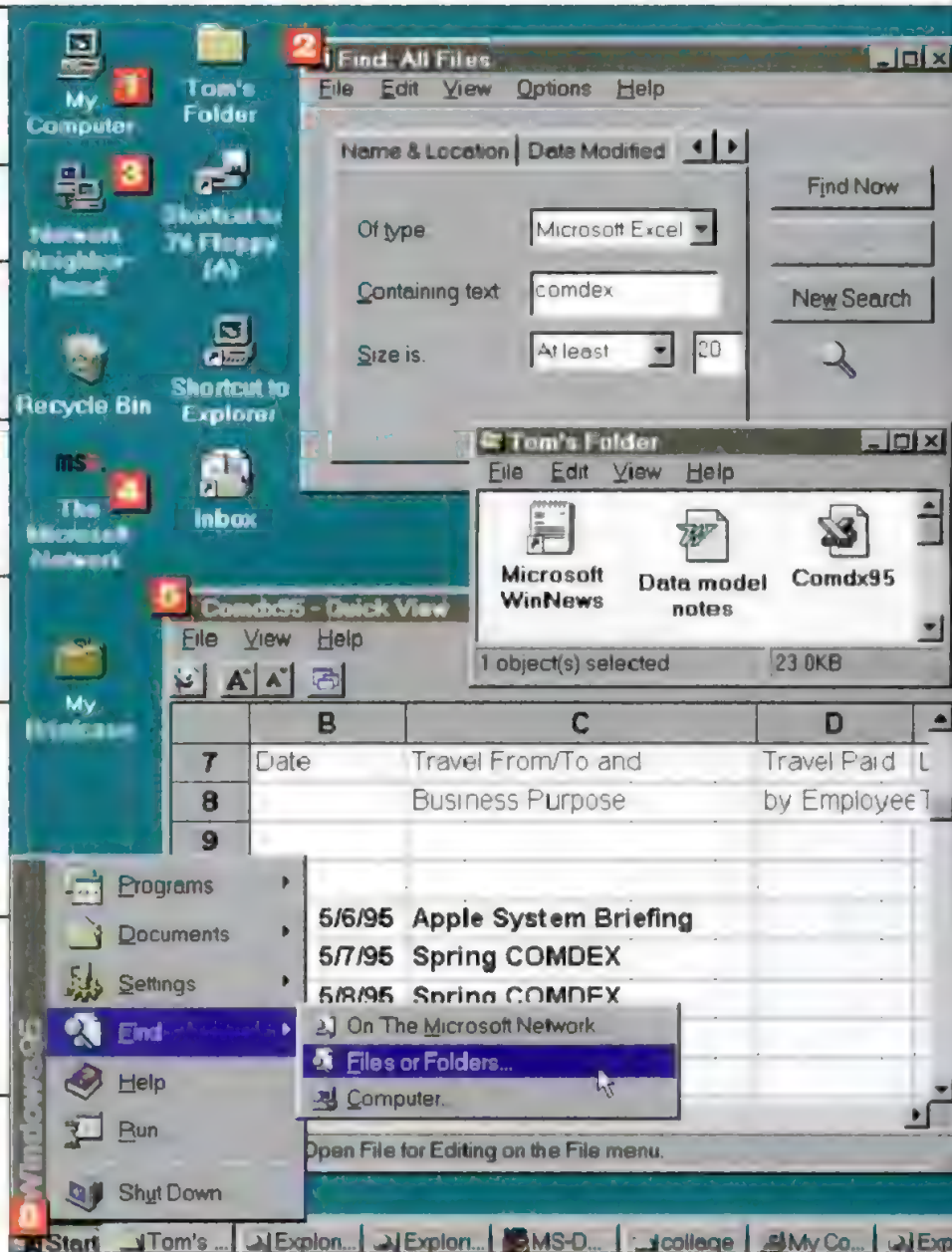
4 THE MICROSOFT NETWORK, Microsoft's budding on-line service, will be accessible through Windows 95.

5 QUICK VIEW is a file viewer that lets you quickly scan the contents of your documents.

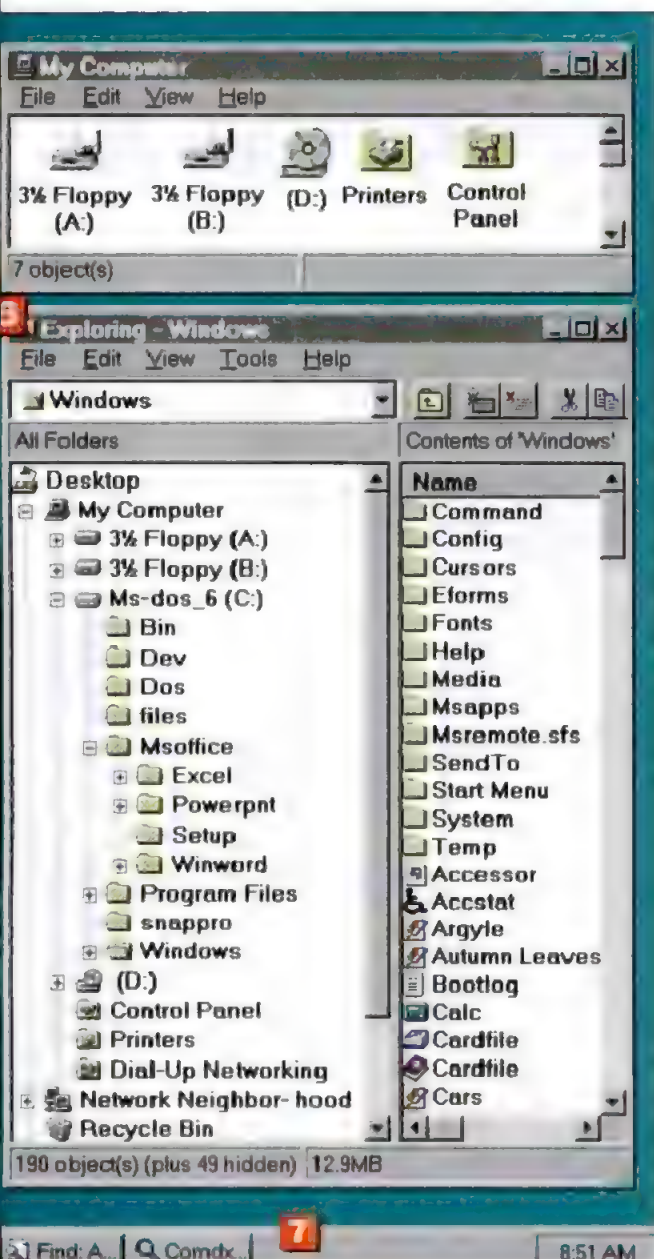
6 WINDOWS EXPLORER is a File Manager replacement that improves on the original and lets you manage files, local and network directories, desktop folders, and system utilities.

7 THE TASKBAR shows all open applications and active windows. Clicking on any task button brings the corresponding session to the foreground.

8 START gives you one-button access to a pop-up menu with programs, documents, utilities, and even system shutdown.



DOWS 95



Upgrade or wait? It's time for tough choices. Here's what you need to know.

By Michael J. Miller

If you're waiting for Microsoft to ship Windows 95, you aren't waiting alone. As software vendors frantically work on Windows 95 versions of their applications and as hardware vendors announce plans to preload the operating system on their machines, hundreds of thousands of users are already working with prerelease copies of Windows 95 and wondering what will happen when the real thing finally ships.

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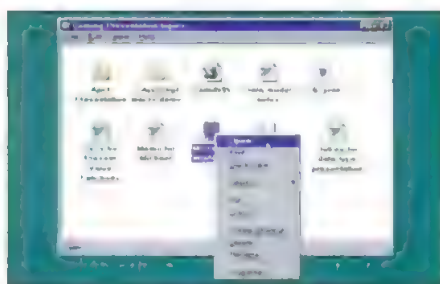
COMPARATIVE USER INTERFACES

OPENING A DOCUMENT

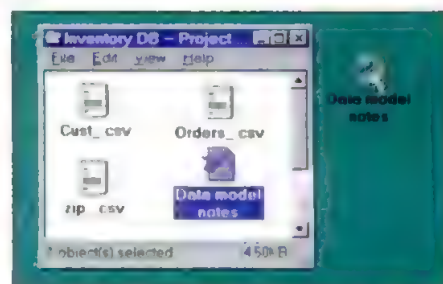
COPYING A DOCUMENT

MICROSOFT WINDOWS 95

Users now get the advantages of an object-oriented interface, including a true desktop and icons, drag-and-drop copy and delete, nestable folders, and easily accessible property dialogs. The file system supports long filenames and is well integrated with the folder/desktop metaphor.



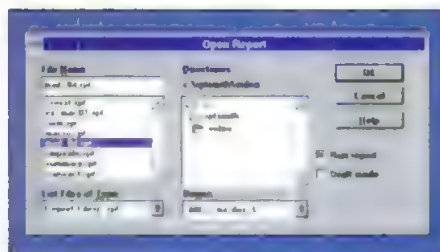
Double-clicking an icon opens a file; right-clicking brings up an Open dialog.



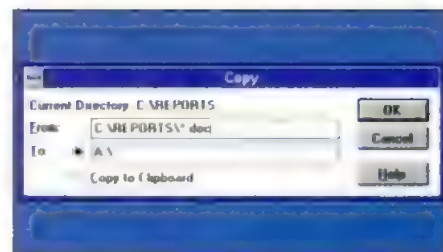
Windows 95 now supports drag-and-drop copying throughout the UI.

MICROSOFT WINDOWS 3.1

Program Manager groups are basically just frames for program icons; groups cannot be nested. File Manager uses physical DOS paths only, so it can't see your groups. Drag-and-drop is limited and counterintuitive. You can't place documents, apps, or groups on the Windows 3.1 desktop.



Most Windows 3.1 users do it the hard way by opening an application and using that app to open a document.



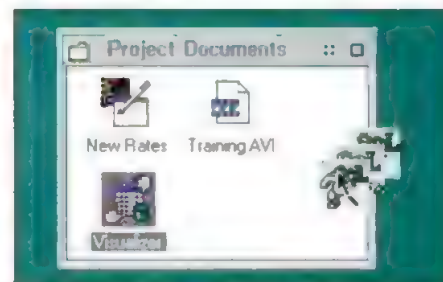
File Manager does offer an awkward form of drag-and-drop copying. Most users just fill in the command line.

IBM'S OS/2 WARP

The Workplace Shell is a deep, object-oriented interface with true folders and drag-and-drop support for copying, deleting, printing, and other functions. Object property sheets are easily accessible via right-click menus. The LaunchPad is a convenient place to dock often-used documents or apps.



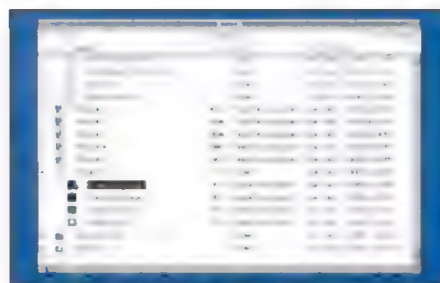
Open files on the LaunchPad, on the desktop, or in folders by double-clicking.



Everything on the Warp desktop is an object. Just drag and drop to copy.

THE MACINTOSH

The Mac has long offered most of the object-oriented interface features now considered standard, including program and document icons, a true desktop, double-click document launching, drag-and-drop copying, and the famous Trash Can. Physical paths for files and documents are hidden from the user.

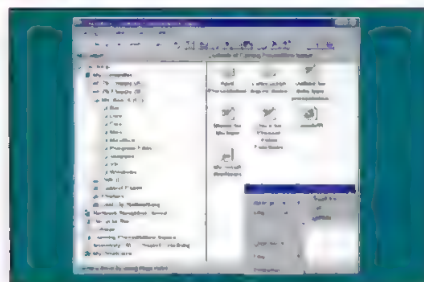


Most users just double-click a document icon to open a file.



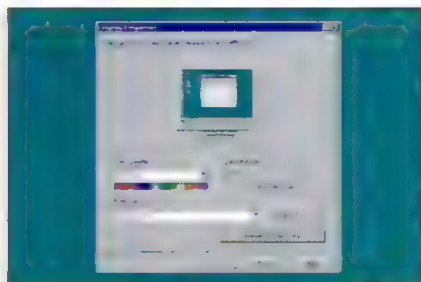
The Mac has had drag-and-drop copying for years.

NAVIGATING YOUR SYSTEM

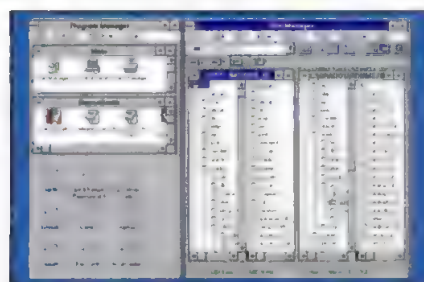


The Windows Explorer is a slick tool for local and network navigation.

CHANGING PROPERTIES



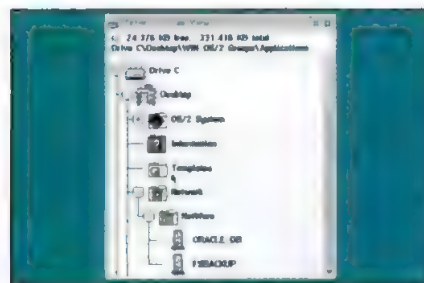
Property sheets pop up when you right-click the corresponding object.



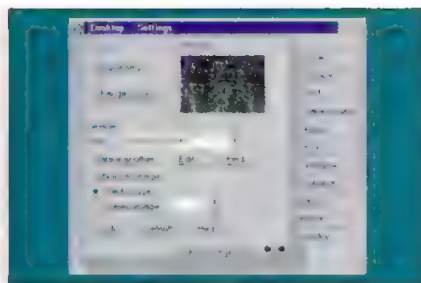
You need Program Manager and File Manager to navigate groups and files.



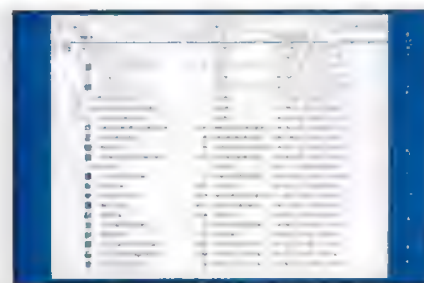
Changing settings means digging deep inside the Control Panels items.



Warp gives you a hierarchical view of your system's files and objects.



Warp's tabbed property sheets are accessed by right-clicking objects.



Users get a hierarchical view of local and network objects.



The Mac uses conventional property dialogs accessed via the Apple menu.

nal beta testers brings the total to almost half a million people who will see copies of Windows 95 before it officially ships (currently slated for sometime in August). We've never seen anything like this with any upgrade of an operating system or application.

But why? Certainly, it's not just the technology. From an architectural standpoint, it's easy to see where others have gone before Windows 95. Yes, it's a 32-bit operating system, allowing you to run 32-bit applications that are theoretically faster than current 16-bit apps. But 32-bit operating systems have been around for a long time, from Unix to the Macintosh System, IBM's OS/2, and Microsoft Windows NT. Through Microsoft's Win32s API, programmers have even been able to write 32-bit code that runs on top of the 16-bit Windows 3.1.

Windows 95 is also a multitasking, multithreaded operating system that can control multiple programs at once. And each program can have multiple concurrent *threads*, or independently executing sub-components. But again, this is nothing new. Virtually all modern operating systems including OS/2, Unix, and Windows NT (but with the exception of Macintosh System 7) support preemptive multitasking and multithreading.

No, what makes Windows 95 the focus of so much attention is simple: It's the most significant upgrade to Windows since Version 3.0 came out in 1990. That release took a poorly selling add-on to DOS and turned it into the world's dominant PC operating environment. For years now, Microsoft has been carefully laying out the case for Windows 95 (originally code-named Chicago) as the logical next step for the estimated 70 million users who have joined the Windows fold.

Today, Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups 3.11 come with some 85

FEATURES PLUS

From May 8 through May 12, you can go online to discuss the Microsoft Windows 95 Preview Program with Microsoft's Brad Chase (general manager, Personal Systems Group) and Brad Silverberg (senior vice president, Personal Systems Group). Hosting the event will be *PC Magazine* editor-in-chief Michael J. Miller and editor Robin Raskin. Type GO EDITOR from any CompuServe! prompt.

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Hard Drive	420MB	420MB	720MB
Cache Internal	8KB	16KB	16KB
Cache External	256KB (optional)	256KB	256KB
Local Bus Graphics	PCI	PCI	PCI
Video Memory/Max.	1MB/2MB	1MB/2MB	2MB/4MB
Compaq SVGA Color Monitor	Yes	Yes	Yes
Diskette Drive	3.5" 1.44MB	3.5" 1.44MB	3.5" 1.44MB
Expansion Slots (Total)	3	4	5
Drive Bays (Total)	3	4	5
Ports: Serial/Parallel	1/1 (ECP)	1/1 (ECP)	1/1 (ECP)
Security Features	Yes	Yes	Yes
101-Key Keyboard, Mouse	Yes	Yes	Yes
Software Preinstalled	MS-DOS® 6, MS-Windows® 3.1	MS-DOS 6, MS-Windows 3.1	MS-DOS 6, MS-Windows 3.1
Energy Star Compliant	Yes	Yes	Yes
Warranty*	3-Year	3-Year	3-Year

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percent of new PCs and account for 62 percent of software sales. Not surprisingly, virtually all of the largest PC software developers have announced plans for Windows 95 versions of their applications, and PC vendors like Compaq and Dell have announced that Windows 95 will be the standard operating system loaded on most of their machines. With so much momentum, it's clear that a lot of people will be taking a hard look at Windows 95.

THE ISSUES YOU FACE

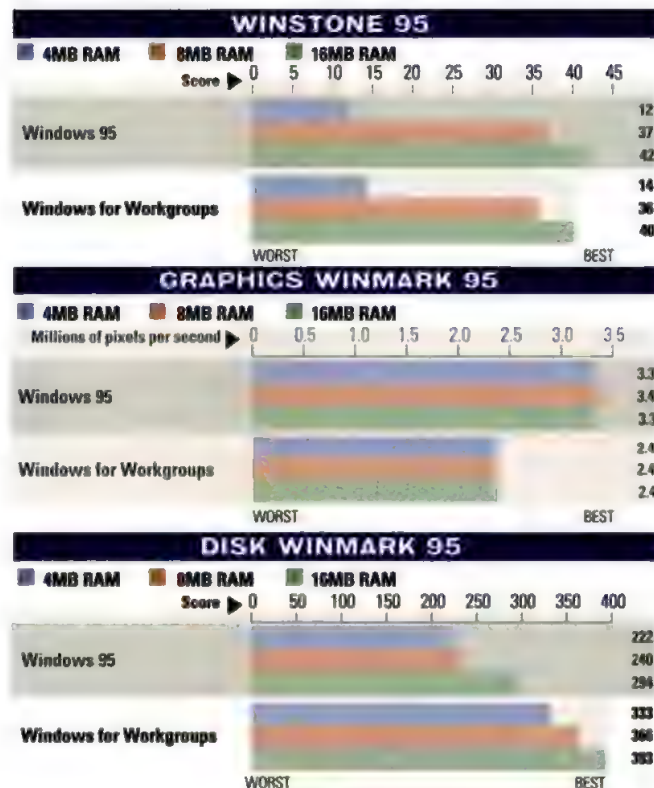
Windows 95 is an ambitious upgrade but one that involves trade-offs between advanced features and backward compatibility. It offers a number of major changes in the user interface, underlying architecture, and networking features; these will be attractive to many people but may cause others to seek out alternatives (such as OS/2 Warp or Windows NT) or even consider sticking with Windows 3.1.

In this story, we set out to preview the issues you will face as Windows 95 comes onto the market. Among the questions we consider:

- What are the implications of the new user interface?
- What's new in Windows 95's architecture?
- How will Windows 95 fit in with your existing network environment, and what new connectivity possibilities does it offer?
- How well does Windows 95 work with your existing machines and software, and how will it influence your future hardware

THE MICROSOFT WINDOWS 95 PREVIEW PROGRAM: PREVIEWING PERFORMANCE

We tested the Windows 95 Preview Edition, which Microsoft is now selling to selected corporate customers, against Microsoft Windows for Workgroups 3.11. The charts below show the results of each operating system on our Winstone 95, Graphics WinMark 95, and Disk WinMark 95 test suites when run on a test machine with varying memory configurations. The test-bed was a Compaq Deskpro 486/33M with a 340MB IDE hard disk and a Number Nine GXE S3-based ISA video card. We tested at 800-by-600 resolution with 256 colors. At Microsoft's recommendation, we did not use SmartDrive in any of these tests. Windows for Workgroups' virtual memory cache size was set to one-fourth the size of physical RAM in each memory configuration.



and software choices?

We also look at how Windows 95 contrasts with alternatives such as OS/2 Warp or Windows NT and even Windows 3.1.

By now, you've probably heard the basic litany of what's new in Windows 95 many times. The user interface has changed dramatically, gaining such ele-

ments as true folders and icons on the desktop, animated icons, a Start button and a Taskbar to launch new applications, and a Recycle Bin for drag-and-drop deletions. The basic architecture has also changed to let you run 32-bit applications with preemptive multitasking, multithreading, and memory protection, so that one bad application is less likely to hang the whole system.

New hardware-support features, such as Plug and Play, AutoPlay for CDs, and several new enhancements aimed at portable computer users are designed to make the hardware and software work together better. Finally, there are new networking features designed to make Windows a better network client, including such things as remote-node access and a new universal mail box. Let's look at each of these areas.

THE DESKTOP

The most visible changes are, of course, in the user interface. Windows 95 sports a number of fundamental improvements over Windows 3.1 designed to focus users on their documents instead of their applications.

Perhaps the most obvious is the addition of icons and folders to the desktop, thus combining many of the functions of Windows 3.1's Pro-

gram Manager and File Manager. This new look—with subdirectories shown as folders and files appearing inside them as icons of spreadsheets, documents, or other objects—is a big change for Windows. To open a document or program, you just double-click on the icon. You'll also be able to nest folders inside other folders, giving you

Our Contributors: MICHAEL J. MILLER is the editor-in-chief and ROBIN RASKIN is the editor of *PC Magazine*. JOHN C. DVORAK and JIM SEYMOUR are contributing editors of *PC Magazine*. NICK STAM is technical director of hardware at PC Magazine Labs. THOMAS MACE was the associate editor in charge of this story, and JAY MUNRO was the project leader.

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intuitive visual management of subdirectory hierarchies.

A new Taskbar at the bottom of the screen provides a button for each program you're currently running and each window you have open or minimized on your desktop. You simply click on a button to switch to a particular program or window. In addition, a Start button on the left side of the Taskbar brings up a pop-up

menu that lets you quickly move to any application or document, search for programs, run Windows help, or shut down or suspend Windows itself.

Another big change is the addition of object-oriented functionality to the desktop. For example, when you right-click on any icon, you immediately access a menu that lets you see all the things you can do to the underlying object (which might be

a file, program, or system component such as a drive). Depending on the object, you could then open it, copy its contents, or change a variety of other property settings. This approach extends to the file system itself; to copy a file, you simply drag it from one window to another. In this way, the functions of Program Manager and File Manager have been combined and extended.

• OS/2 Warp and Beyond

By Michael J. Miller

Finally, Windows 3.1 users are getting 32-bit operation, preemptive multitasking, multithreading, and an object-oriented desktop. Big deal, say OS/2 users, who've enjoyed these features for years.

Since Version 2.1—which introduced a full 32-bit implementation and the Workplace Shell user interface—OS/2 has kept essentially the same underlying architecture it uses today. Since OS/2 Warp Version 3 (the most recent OS/2 release) has no need to play catch-up on fundamentals, it focuses instead on usability, cosmetic enhancements, and additional utilities.

Known as the Bonus-Pak, the utilities include IBM Works, an entry-level integrated software package, and the Internet Access Kit—the most complete set of Internet tools yet shipped with a PC operating system. (And it's more advanced than the Internet tools promised for Windows 95.)

In February, IBM shipped OS/2 Warp 3 Full Pack, which includes the Win-OS/2 libraries. These effectively give you the ability to run Windows software without having to own a licensed copy of Microsoft Windows. In the near future, IBM will be focusing its efforts on four new versions of

OS/2 that each offer a healthy dose of networking features.

WARP CONNECT

The first new OS/2 Warp version, Warp Connect (slated for release by the time this article appears), will include the most important network

drivers and utilities.

Planned new features include requesters designed to connect OS/2 clients directly to NetWare 3.x and 4.1 and OS/2 LAN Server-based networks.

Warp Connect will also include IPX and NetBIOS support, as well as a new TCP/IP protocol stack. IBM says that this new stack will include PPP connections instead of just the SLIP connection provided in the base OS/2

Warp pack. This stack will offer reduced CPU utilization and provide concurrent access to your network and the Internet.

In addition, Warp Connect finally includes the long-awaited OS/2 peer-to-peer networking services. These will let you share files, printers, and applications via either a parallel port or a network card. IBM says it will include drivers in the box that support about 70 percent of existing Ethernet cards and 90 percent of Token-Ring cards. The same software will let a Warp Connect client connect to a LAN Server 4.0 server, allowing an

easy upgrade from a peer network to a client/server network.

Warp Connect will also include IBM's LAN Distance software, which enables remote dial-in to a connection server on a network and subsequent point-to-point connections to any devices on the network. Unlike Windows 95, Warp Connect does not include facilities to turn your PC into a dial-up server. Other new features include ASK PSP, a new help database CD with an English-like query interface.

On the mail side of Warp Connect, IBM has chosen to bundle Lotus Notes Express rather than its own Ultimedia Mail/2. Notes Express lets you connect to any Notes server, although you can use only seven preinstalled templates.

Like the standard Warp edition, Warp Connect will also come in two versions: one without the Windows libraries and the other as a Full Pack that includes Win-OS/2.

EXTEND PACK

IBM is planning yet another set of utilities, tentatively called the Extend Pack, which is designed for larger enterprises and which the company will offer its corporate customers. The Extend Pack will include mobile file synchronization, 3270 emulation, full SNA stacks (including APPC support), and a remote client for Shiva dial-up modems. New network management utilities will include a systems performance monitor and hooks for the NetView Distribution Manager 2.0

*Since Warp
has no need to
play catch-up,
it focuses on
usability and
additional
utilities.*

Everything in the environment, even the desktop itself, shows object-oriented behavior. By right-clicking on the desktop, you pull up a menu that lets you arrange your icons or change desktop properties such as your wallpaper, screen saver, or Windows color scheme. You can even change your display resolution and color depth on the fly, if your display hardware supports it.

agent for remote distribution of software. IBM currently plans to offer the Extend Pack to corporations for a nominal material and fulfillment fee at the same time as Warp Connect.

OS/2 FOR THE POWERPC

Though Warp 3 didn't bring changes to OS/2's underlying architecture, that change is coming this summer. IBM has long talked about a future operating system called Workplace OS based on a microkernel architecture. Originally, various operating system personalities—including OS/2, Windows, AIX, and possibly the Macintosh System—would have run on top of that kernel, potentially at the same time.

The multiple personalities part of the plan has since been shelved, but the rest remains. IBM plans the first release of the microkernel-based operating system this summer; it will be called OS/2 Warp for PowerPC. The system will rely on emulation to provide backward compatibility. In particular, it will run the Win-OS/2 library through emulation of the Intel x86 architecture, thereby letting you run Windows 3.1 applications. IBM plans a microkernel-based version of OS/2 for x86-based PCs sometime in 1996.

THE BIG PICTURE

IBM says it has now sold more than eight million copies of OS/2, including upgrades and multiple versions. It also claims that more than one million copies of Warp 3 have been shipped to dealers since it was introduced in November 1994. (For more information, refer to "OS/2 Warp 3 and Windows NT 3.5: The Future's Here Today," December 20, 1994.)

Much of this is just Windows 95 playing catch-up, of course. The folder-and-icon metaphor dates back to work at Xerox PARC two decades ago and has long been on the Macintosh. Object-oriented desktop paradigms were pioneered on the PC years ago in products like HP's NewWave, NeXT's NeXTstep, and OS/2's Workplace Shell. The Taskbar concept is very similar to Dashboard

OS/2 still lacks the broad native application support of Windows 3.1, though there are signs that this may be changing. Lotus plans to release its next generation of applications for both OS/2 and Windows, and other developers such as Corel are reconsidering their plans. In the meantime, OS/2 (either the Warp Full Pack or an earlier version installed on top of Windows) runs most Windows 3.1 applications quite well. Warp can run applications written to the Win32s API but does not support Win32 as implemented in Windows NT or Windows 95. IBM says it has the rights to support such applications and will do so if its customers so desire.

From an architectural standpoint, Warp is already far more sophisticated than Windows 3.1. It also offers some features not found in Windows 95, like the ability to run Windows 3.1 sessions in separate virtual machines. And it gives you more extensive customization of Windows and DOS applications than either version of Windows. Warp does have some disadvantages (such as a single input queue), but the additional networking support of Warp Connect and the coming microkernel version will add strength and flexibility to an already powerful platform. □

► **OS/2 Warp Version 3.** List price: \$129. **OS/2 Warp Version 3 Full Pack.** List price: \$199. **OS/2 Warp Connect Version 3.** List price: \$229. **OS/2 Warp Connect Version 3 Full Pack.** List price: \$299. **OS/2 Warp Connect Version 3 with Extend Pack.** List price: \$235. IBM Corp., Armonk NY 10504; 800-342-6672.

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2.0 (originally from HP, now from Starfish Software), or the Launch Pad in OS/2 Warp, Version 3.

GETTING USED TO IT

If you're used to Windows 3.1, you'll find that performing basic file management from the desktop by dragging and dropping file icons takes some getting used to. But you'll soon notice how much power this UI can offer. For example, a single icon called My Computer provides access to your drives (and all the files they contain), the Control Panel, your printers, and dial-up networking options. The Windows desktop also comes with a Mac-like Recycle Bin that you can use to delete files (just drag the file's icon into the bin), and you can put a printer on the desktop to enable drag-and-drop printing. Clicking the Network Neighborhood icon displays all the servers and printers in your immediate workgroup, and clicking Entire Network displays all the servers you can connect to—which could be dozens in a large corporation.

You'll also have to rethink file-naming conventions. The familiar DOS file-naming scheme of eight characters followed by a three-character extension has been replaced by long filenames (for example, "Getting Ready for Windows 95"). Much of this, however, is skin-deep. Internally, the file system still stores filenames in the old FAT scheme, automatically picking the most logical choice. This is so that files can be opened by existing Windows applications, which typically don't allow or recognize long filenames. But you should expect all new applications to work with these new names, which now can be as long as 255 characters.

In addition to performing basic file management from the desktop, you can also use the new Windows Explorer, essentially a souped-up File Manager. Since Explorer uses an outline metaphor, you can get to all your drives, whether local or network, from the same window and view them as large or small icons or a list.

A much-improved Find command (which you can run from Explorer or directly from the Start menu) can scan all or part of a disk for files matching specified criteria, including embedded words

and phrases; you can also save commonly used searches. Find can also find other computers on your network. Another slick new feature is the Quick View option. When you right-click a document object on the desktop or select a document in Explorer, you can choose Quick View to scan the contents of the file without having to load the app that created it.

The Windows 95 viewers are based on viewers from Systems Compatibility Corp.'s well-known Outside In/for Windows. At press time, Microsoft was planning to ship a basic set of file viewers to OEMs and on the CD version but was undecided whether viewers would be included with the floppy-disk-based product. We also expect a number of third parties, including Systems Compatibility, to ship viewers for other applications and to extend Quick View's functionality (by enabling printing from a view, for example).

Explorer is different enough from File Manager that it takes some getting used to. For instance, you now see the amount of free disk space on a drive only when the drive is selected in the Details window. But Explorer offers much better integration and smoother operation. You can finally move a file from one drive or directory (folder) to another without opening multiple windows, for instance. Many third-party file management utilities have had these features for some time, but it's good to have them in the base operating system. Again, you should expect a lot of third-party programs designed to enhance or replace Explorer.

Another useful enhancement, called Shortcuts, gives you the ability to create icons that point to objects (such as files, folders, or programs) that are normally stored somewhere out of view. You can place Shortcut icons almost anywhere in the user interface, although the desktop or the Start-button menu are the most convenient locations. Typically, you'll

use Shortcuts to access regularly used documents or programs. By clicking on the Shortcut, you launch whatever object it points to. (This approach is similar to the Shadows used in OS/2's Workplace Shell.)

Finally, there are many cosmetic changes, including the 3-D look of menus

binned as one operating system.

Windows 95 offers a 32-bit applications programming interface (API), called Win32c, that incorporates most of the Win32 API from Windows NT and adds a few extensions. Indeed, we've been able to run Windows NT applications such as Word and Excel under

■ Windows 95: Myths and Realities

By Michael J. Miller

MYTH: DOS is gone, and Windows 95 is a completely new operating system.

REALITY: Most of Windows 95 is new, but it still has a DOS component and some DOS structures—mostly (but not entirely) for backward compatibility.

MYTH: Now I can quit worrying about low and high memory.

REALITY: More drivers and utilities are being written as virtual device drivers. They reside above 1MB, but you can also load real-mode device drivers and TSRs in lower memory. But you can still run out of lower memory, which is why Windows 95 includes MemMaker and why third-party memory managers are still important.

MYTH: Program Manager and File Manager are dead.

REALITY: Program Manager is dead, replaced by a true desktop. But you can think of Explorer as File Manager 4.0.



MYTH: Windows 95 is "crash-proof."

REALITY: *Nothing* is crash-proof. It's more difficult to crash Windows 95 than Windows 3.1, but badly behaved programs can still bring everything down.

MYTH: Plug and Play means adding new cards and software will be completely seamless.

REALITY: Plug and Play is great on paper, but you'll need a machine with a custom BIOS and adapter boards.

MYTH: 32-bit applications are faster than 16-bit applications.

REALITY: For some tasks, 32-bit is faster. For others, tight hand-tuned 16-bit code may still be superior.

MYTH: Windows 95 is much easier to learn than Windows 3.1.

REALITY: Maybe for new users. But if you're used to Windows 3.1, prepare to spend some quality time with this new operating system and its new desktop before you really feel at home. □

and icons and the new animated icons that show actions such as windows being opened or files being copied or moved from one folder to another.

In summary, there is a lot to learn. Though Microsoft has done some things to make the transition easier (like converting your Program Manager groups into items on the Programs menu), even the most experienced Windows user will need several hours to feel at home. At the beginning, at least, some Windows 3.1 users may find the interface actually slows them down for certain operations.

ARCHITECTURAL INNOVATIONS

The basic architecture of Windows has changed significantly. Most dramatically, DOS and Windows are now com-

Windows 95, where they behave as native applications.

For some kinds of applications, particularly ones that involve large files or calculations that use 32-bit register operations, 32-bit support could result in faster execution of 16- and 32-bit applications. But in many cases, developers have had so many years to tune their 16-bit applications that you may not see an improvement from a move to 32 bits. You should also expect to see many developers write their first Windows 95 applications using a combination of 16- and 32-bit code. Of course, competing operating systems (including OS/2 and Windows NT) have had 32-bit APIs available for some time. Developers can even write 32-bit applications that run under

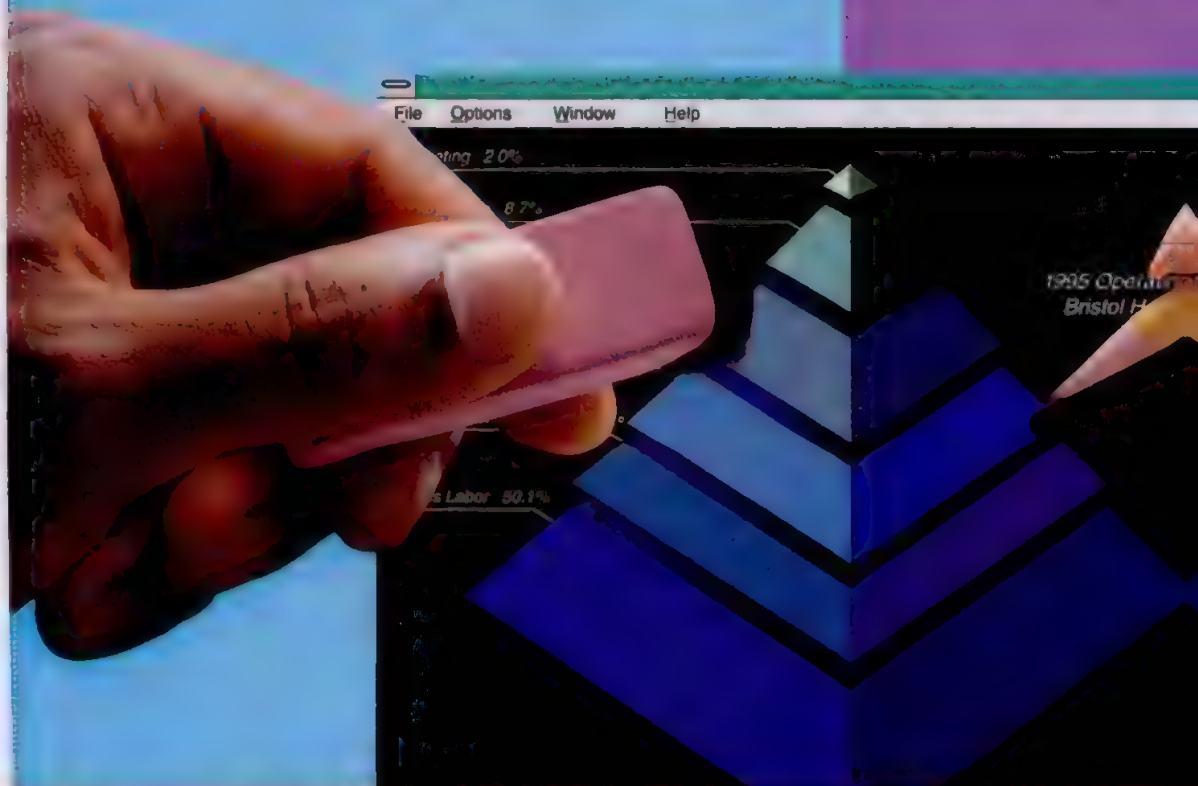


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Windows 3.1 using the Win32s subset of the Win32 API.

The basic information about most new 32-bit programs will be stored in a system registry, similar to that used by Windows NT, OS/2, and OLE applications running under Windows 3.1. In most cases, this registry takes the place of the .INI files for Windows, the system, and for applications. The registry is complex and not designed for most users to edit manually. Again, it's an area where third-party utilities could improve on the

product's basic functionality.

Windows 95 supports preemptive multitasking of 32-bit applications, meaning that the operating system doles out fixed amounts of system resources to as many applications as you have in use. Each 32-bit app also runs in its own protected address space, lessening the chances that one rogue program will hang the entire system. But 16-bit Windows 3.1 applications all run in the same address space, where they are cooperatively multitasked. One bad Windows 3.1 app can

still bring down the others, and the division of system resources is less predictable. In comparison, OS/2 and Windows NT offer an option for handling 16-bit Windows apps more gracefully, letting you run them in individual, protected address spaces. Though setting up the details of individual versus shared memory in OS/2 or Windows NT can be complex, it does provide better safety and more predictable execution.

Unlike OS/2 or Windows NT, Windows 95 does include a DOS compo-

■ Windows 95: Best Bet for the Mainstream

By Jim Seymour

We've waited so long for Windows 95 that our expectations are sky-high. Windows 95 has been sold (oversold, perhaps inevitably) as the answer to all our Windows problems—maybe to the world's problems, as well.

Of course, Windows 95 won't meet all those expectations; we're kidding ourselves if we ignore its not-so-good aspects. At the same time, it has a host of important new features and improvements. On balance, the good far outweighs the bad; this is a solid, important upgrade.

Don't look at Windows 95 as a performance upgrade—especially if you define performance in terms of speed. As a 32-bit operating system, it *should* run faster. Realistically, the first release of Windows 95 and the first apps written for it won't take full advantage of the new 32-bit architecture.

Windows 95 will improve on Windows 3.x's marginal multitasking right away, however. When one program went south in Windows 3.1, it was all too easy for everything else to go along. Windows 95 already seems more stable, and I'm optimistic about finally being able to breathe deeply when running important jobs.

Another long-standing gripe, resource limits, gets fixed. With Windows 3.1, two hidden 64K memory heaps manage essential system functions. When these system resources fall below about 15 to 20 percent, you're heading for a crash. In Windows 95, system resources still count, but you're much less likely to run out of them. I've been able to run many more applications simultaneously under Windows 95. And it cleans up after ill-behaved apps (including Microsoft's own) that upon closing don't give back all the resources they claimed.

Plug and Play? Windows 95-equipped PCs still won't be as easy to set up and reconfigure as Macs. But they'll

be a lot easier to rejigger than any x86 PC you've used before. A Plug and Play-compatible computer checks attached components when it boots and handles such irritating grit in x86 designs as IRQ and port assignments automatically.

NETWORKING AND THE INTERNET

The Microsoft Network, an entirely new venture, poses a challenge—but not necessarily a threat—to on-line services such as America Online, CompuServe, GENie, and Prodigy, as well as New Age on-line wanna-bes such as AT&T's Interchange. Whatever the merits of The Microsoft Network, it can't hurt Microsoft to have the necessary connection software installed on perhaps 25 million PCs by the end of 1995.

The quality or even the existence of Windows 95's built-in Internet tools is as yet unknown, but Microsoft has been investing in the right companies and technologies to provide a first-class connection and a great Web browser.

Finally, moving to Windows 95 is frankly unsettling for Windows 3.1 users. The interface is completely different. Double-clicking has nearly disappeared. Program Manager has been replaced. But the learning curve, while steep, is short. I estimate most Windows 3.1 users will pick up the essentials in about half an hour. Becoming comfortable

may take another two or three hours. At first, Windows 95 seems hopelessly awkward, but trust me: It's worth the effort, and you'll soon feel at home.

That's it, in a nutshell. Most of Windows 95's changes are profound and welcome. The areas that still need improvement are likely to get attention from Microsoft in a second release sometime in late 1996. Until then, Windows 95 looks to me like the best bet for a mass-market PC operating system. □



*“In a nutshell,
most of
Windows 95's
changes are
profound and
welcome.”*

ment—effectively MS-DOS 7—that lets you use real-mode device drivers and TSR programs. This is necessary for compatibility, but does mean that a bad driver or TSR is free to crash the entire system.

From the developer's standpoint, Object Linking and Embedding (OLE) is also a crucial part of the Windows 95 story. Microsoft has long been pushing OLE—with its support for compound documents, cross-application macro control, and common object registra-

tion—as a critical API. In fact, Microsoft requires OLE support in order for an application to get the coveted Windows 95 logo. (Recently, the company softened its position by announcing that it might also award the logo to applications written to Component Integration Lab's OpenDoc specification, a competing object standard that should be compatible with OLE.)

For a detailed discussion of the Windows 95 architecture, see "Under the Hood: Windows 95 and Its Competitors."

PLUG, PLAY, AND PORT

Many of the innovations in Windows 95 are designed to make Windows work better with hardware. The most obvious improvement in this area is Plug and Play, a new specification designed to make an operating system recognize and control any peripheral. Plug and Play is designed to put an end to the configuration frustrations that just about all of us have experienced with PCs. But to take full advantage of this scheme, you'll also need a Plug and Play BIOS and add-in boards.

■ OS/2 Warp: *Deep, Rich, and Powerful*

By John C. Dvorak

More than a few people have suggested that OS/2 Warp now has an opportunity to become important, because Windows 95 is very late. In fact, its chances would be much better if Windows 95 were actually shipping so that the two systems could be compared head to head. But since Windows 95 is still in beta testing, you can't honestly do the necessary comparison. Anytime someone tries to compare the two, the critics complain that it's unfair. Meanwhile, the Windows 95 boosters seem free to promote their unseen darling like a lover buying a mail-order bride: All that ardor is based on pictures.

While this continues, Warp is at an extreme disadvantage. And even worse, the excitement over Warp will be ebbing just as Windows 95 hits the streets. Warp will be perceived in the market as *old*, and Windows 95 (or Windows 96) will be perceived as *new*. It's another classic case of Microsoft outfoxing IBM, quality be damned.

But at the heart of it all is Warp itself. The more I use Warp, the more I see its greatness. I find it to be phenomenal. And the BonusPak, which includes an easy-to-use Internet browser and Internet access tools, is worth the price of the whole package.

Warp is deep. It's deep with power, deep with richness. The BonusPak makes it deep with a slew of applications that are very cool. With Warp, you can almost avoid buying any other applications. It's that complete.

When looked at objectively, Warp (even with the BonusPak) is an enormous loss leader for IBM. If it really took off in sales, I can assure you that Microsoft would be suing IBM in court for dumping a product in the market—and Microsoft would win! I'm personally stunned that the majority of computer users haven't seen this offering as the deal of the century and kept Warp at the top of the bestseller list.

GIT ALONG, LITTLE DOGIES

But they haven't, and I don't expect them to change. Once the Microsoft ring is in their nose, they don't veer too far away from the path set out for them. The current path is one of waiting and grazing. I suppose the best we can do for these users is to turn them away from the storm when it comes so they don't swallow too much rain and drown.

What they *will* have a tough time swallowing, however, is the fact that Microsoft's desire to copy Apple and

The Macintosh Way will result in their inheritance of the exact same problem that Mac users have: The constant need to upgrade all applications. Windows 95 and its offerings will not be nearly as backward-compatible with old applications as Warp. Warp's VDMs (Virtual DOS Machines), that "better DOS than DOS" they talk about, are indeed better than DOS. They allow me to multitask a few old DOS programs in ways I never could before. Multitasking old DOS programs with Windows 95? I think not.

Though newcomers don't care, the power users who really use their computers and actually do have legacy applications will prefer Warp. And users who do not want to get onto the upgrade merry-go-round will prefer Warp. And users who like depth, power, and even a degree of nerdiness (sorry, guys) will prefer Warp.

But Warp users must realize that the next wave of users are being cajoled by programs like Microsoft Bob. They are the ones who will slide into Windows 95 comfortably. And Warp users must realize that Microsoft has smart kids who work 16 hours a day to beat IBM. The smart kids at IBM with this kind of energy are unseen and unheard. It's a problem. But do I care? I use Warp, and I can do a lot with it. □



"The more I use Warp, the more I see its greatness. I find it to be phenomenal."

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Similar features are available as add-ins for Windows 3.1; OS/2 and Windows NT are expected to get Plug and Play upgrades at some point.

In the meantime, our experience with Plug and Play has been mixed. With Windows 95, a machine with a Plug and Play BIOS, and boards specifically designed for Plug and Play, preliminary testing has demonstrated nearly trouble-free operation. But with older machines or even new machines with older boards, we ran into a lot of difficulties. (See "Plug and Play: Effortless Upgrades.")

The elegant new AutoPlay feature offers instant access to AutoPlay-compatible CDs. Just put one in your CD-

laptop to check for a network connection or a CD-ROM if you are plugged into the dock, but not otherwise. Theoretically, this technology could even be used to change your display resolution on the fly, so that you could use standard VGA resolution on your laptop screen but immediately switch to a higher resolution when you plug into a larger monitor. You won't be able to change your color depth on the fly, however, since the system forces you to restart the machine—something not necessary with the Macintosh.

Other portable-oriented basics included in the operating system are a Suspend option on the Start menu and a built-in battery meter, which appears in the Taskbar.

networks and includes the NetBEUI, IPX/SPX, and TCP/IP protocol stacks. Windows 95 is also currently being tested by other companies as a client for NOSs such as Banyan's VINES, Digital's Pathworks, and FTP's NFS. (You can still use older real-mode clients or drivers, although in practice, we ran into occasional but unexplained problems.) Like Windows for Workgroups, Windows 95 comes with the software to act as a server on a Windows network, providing peer-to-peer networking services.

Microsoft has also developed a variety of new networking utilities; although at press time, the company was still undecided whether to include them in the final

■ Windows 95: Going for the Logo

By Nick Stam

What's in a name, you ask? Well, the Windows 95 name and logo on the box of a PC or peripheral will denote many things about what's inside.

Microsoft has designed a hardware certification testing program and specified minimum configurations for PCs or peripherals that want to wear the coveted Windows 95 logo. And to display the logo, a PC must be sold with Windows 95 preinstalled. (Microsoft is, however, currently developing a program for the retail market to let some hardware vendors display the "Designed for Windows 95" logo before the software ships.) The company also released a list of recommended PC and peripheral features that contribute to higher performance and ease of use.

HARDWARE CERTIFICATION

Microsoft's Hardware Compatibility Tests (HCTs) determine whether specific func-

tions of PCs and peripherals operate correctly under Windows 95. A device must pass the HCTs under the supervision of an independent test lab or Microsoft's own Compatibility Labs.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Microsoft's *Hardware Design Guide for Windows 95* specifies the minimum required configuration for laptops, desk-

Designed for



Microsoft
Windows 95

top PCs, and peripherals that want to claim they were "Designed for Windows 95." The book also notes recommended features for multimedia-oriented systems.

For a desktop PC to qualify for the logo, it must be at least a 386 with 4MB of RAM, a Plug and Play BIOS (though Plug and Play expansion cards are *not* required), and a standard VGA display adapter capable of 640-by-480 resolution with 256 colors. Interestingly, neither a CD-ROM drive nor audio capability is required. □

ROM drive and it will play, eliminating software setup and unnecessary directories on your hard disk.

A number of other changes are designed to make Windows 95 work better with portable computers. One advance is that the system can now recognize multiple configurations, so that it can automatically detect if the portable is plugged into a docking station. This would allow your

Some of the biggest differences between Windows 95 and Windows 3.1 or even Windows for Workgroups 3.11 center on networking. Windows 95 is a far better network client and has a lot of additional networking features.

NETWORKING NICETIES

Windows 95 comes out of the box as a client for both NetWare and Windows

package. The utilities include Netwatch and System Monitor (which let you monitor the performance of your machine as a network client), an SNMP agent, a backup agent, and a System Policy Editor. The list is designed to make it easier for network administrators to manage Windows 95 clients.

Another new networking feature is the Microsoft Exchange client, intended to be able to collect mail from multiple services. Exchange, which was called InfoCenter in earlier test releases, is designed so that third-party vendors can write drivers that let it exchange mail with other mail systems. The current version includes drivers for Microsoft Mail, Microsoft's forthcoming Exchange server, Internet mail, and CompuServe. Microsoft says several other drivers are currently being written, but it hasn't yet decided which will be included in which versions of the operating system.

The Exchange client can also dial up The Microsoft Network, Microsoft's forthcoming on-line service. This is expected to be one of the first options that users of the final Windows 95 will see. One elegant feature is the ability to place a shortcut from Microsoft Network into a file or application, allowing you to go directly from an application to a support area for that application. As yet, we

Preemptive Strikes: Support Strategies for Windows 95

By Robin Raskin

Historically, Microsoft hasn't exactly earned high marks from *PC Magazine* readers when it comes to supporting Windows. As the ship date for Windows 95 nears, the company wants to turn that around with a preemptive support strike involving documentation, training, and technical support. Considering that Microsoft expects to get at least three times as many support calls per day as it did at the launch of Windows 3.1, that's probably a wise move.

Software vendors, resellers, solution providers, and large sites that have bought the beta version have already received the Migration Planning Kit—a 1,500-page collection of tools and information for organizations rolling out Windows 95 upgrades. Buyers of the Windows 95 CD-ROM will also get these tools.

Microsoft has also instituted a series of Windows 95 help forums, the most ambitious of which are WinNews and TrainCast. WinNews offers docu-

ments and will be carried by most major on-line services. TrainCast is a 30-hour educational television series for information specialists and technical-support personnel.

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- GENie: download files from WinNews areas under the Windows RTC

can download TrainCast free or send attendees to scheduled sessions at Microsoft Authorized Technical Education Centers worldwide. Eventually, the content for the series will be carried by the Jones Computer Network

via the Mind Extension University cable television channel.

During testing of the Windows 95 Preview Program beta, calls to Microsoft Technical Support are free. After the launch, new users will get free 24-hour, 7-day-a-week support for 90 days following their purchase.

Microsoft has hired five companies with experience in the field to handle Windows 95 technical support: Digital Equipment Corp., Keane, MicroAge, Softmart, and Unisys. After your 90 days of free support are up, you'll have a variety of cost-based support plans from these providers or Microsoft.

Microsoft is also continuing its on-line support (on America Online, CompuServe, the Internet—via FTP—and GENie), FastTips (a fax-back system of quick tips), and other databases, including the Microsoft KnowledgeBase. The Microsoft Network, scheduled to ship with Windows 95, will also be a part of the support solution, both during the preview phase and after the product launch. □

haven't been able to test Microsoft Network extensively, although Microsoft has signed up many third-party firms to offer support through that service (for details, see "Preemptive Strikes: Support Strategies for Windows 95").

DIAL ME UP

The powerful new Dial-Up Networking option extends the network by letting a remote system act as a node on several different network types. Windows 95 can dial a Windows NT Remote Access Server, NetWare Connect, a PPP connection to Internet-access providers, or systems such as Shiva's NetModem or LanRover. Another option lets you set up your office machine as a dial-up server, so you could dial in to your desktop from your portable and use your hard

disk, printer, or even network resources remotely. You could also connect via a serial or parallel port. In all these cases, your machine acts as a remote node, although Windows 95 does not provide remote-control software.

Briefcases, which can be used to store copies of files that you want to synchronize between two Windows machines automatically, are a welcome addition for those who use both mobile and desktop systems. Basic Briefcases provide only rudimentary replication—they get confused if the same document gets changed in both places—but a Briefcase API makes the system extensible.

In terms of networking, Windows 95 has a lot more features than Windows for Workgroups, Windows NT, or OS/2 Warp 3. But Warp has a more extensive

list of Internet connectivity features, and IBM has plans to include features such as peer-to-peer networking, a remote-access client, and a Lotus Notes Express client in its forthcoming OS/2 Warp Connect (for details on upcoming Warp releases, see "OS/2 Warp and Beyond").

THIRD-PARTY PLANS

It's no secret that virtually all large software vendors are currently working on upgrades of their major applications to take advantage of Windows 95, including its new user-interface elements and 32-bit operation. Because Windows 95 has been delayed so often, few of these vendors are making specific plans public, but you can expect to see Windows 95 versions of many of the major applications from Adobe, Corel, Lotus, and Novell/Word-

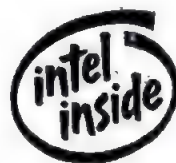
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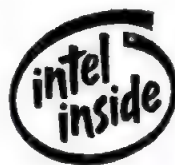
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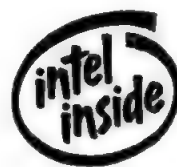
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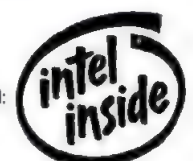


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■ Windows 95: *New Software*

By Michael J. Miller

It seems as if just about every significant vendor of personal computer software is currently working on new releases of its major products designed specifically for Windows 95. From a technical standpoint, they see much to gain. By building new versions, they can leverage Windows 95's advanced features such as 32-bit linear addressing and multiple program threads or at least the new user interface and the new, more powerful common dialog boxes.

From a practical business standpoint, there's another reason why so many vendors are frantically writing code for Windows 95. They know from experience that many computer users look to buy new applications or new utilities when they update their operating system.

APPLICATION SOFTWARE

On the application side of the software business, just about everyone wants into the act. Most companies are now quietly showing Windows 95 beta versions of their wares, but several upgrades have been publicly announced. For instance, Lotus has shown an early version of its Freelance Graphics that will include such

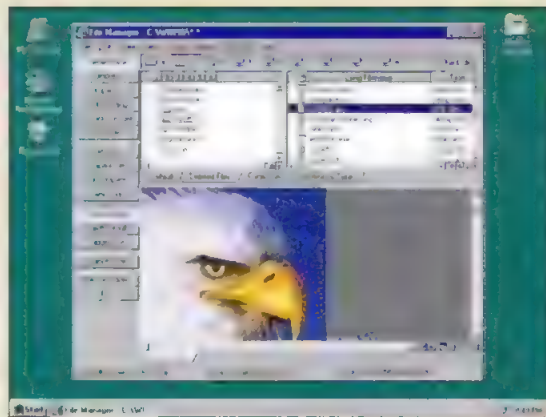
things as the LotusScript cross-application macro language, an Infobox for changing the properties of different parts of the system, and several changes in the user interface. Expect similar changes in other parts of Lotus's SmartSuite.

Similarly, Novell plans to add multithreading to core features (such as printing and spell-checking) in WordPerfect and, later, to other parts of its PerfectOffice suite of applications.

Microsoft itself has been relatively quiet about upgrades to its Microsoft Office applications, but you can expect the minimum of a move to 32-bit applications with support for the new common dialogs. Note that Microsoft Word and Excel for Windows NT will already run as native applications under Windows 95, although they are visually identical to the existing Windows 3.1 versions. At press time, there have been some unconfirmed rumors that Microsoft may even include a locked version of Microsoft Office on the Windows 95 CD.

Corel Corp. has had to delay its CorelDRAW 6.0, which was designed for Windows 95, because of delays to the operating system. And Corel is also working on a new office suite for this environment.

A few smaller vendors have also shown early versions of their Windows 95 applications. These include Micrografx's Picture Publisher, an image-editing program; Shapeware's Visio, a drag-and-drop drawing pro-



Symantec's new Norton Navigator is slated to include a replacement for Windows 95's Explorer.

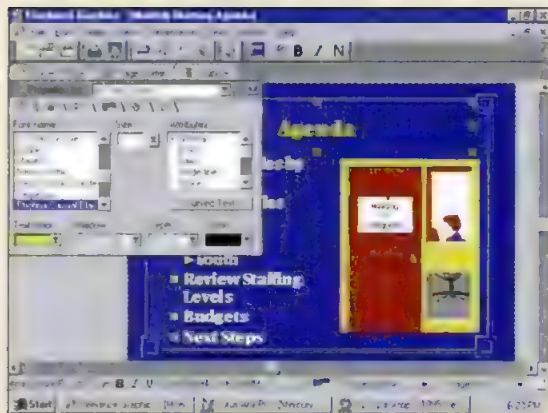
gram; Delrina's WinFax PRO, which adds voice messaging capability; and NCSA's Mosaic World-Wide Web browser.

NEW UTILITIES

A number of utility vendors are also looking forward to Windows 95. This is despite the fact that the new operating system offers many features (an object-oriented desktop, for example) that used to be available only through add-on utilities.

The largest utility company, Symantec, has several new Windows 95 products in the works. The Norton Utilities for Windows 95 is out in a Preview Edition designed to be used with the Microsoft Windows 95 Preview Program beta. This package offers many of Norton's traditional features and some updates of its classic data-recovery capabilities. The latter include UnErase, here implemented using a Wizard-style interface; an improved Recycle Bin, making it easier to retrieve deleted files; a rescue disk feature for creating floppy disks with important system files; and a new Space Wizard for finding duplicate files on a hard disk.

To give you more information about your system, the new version of



Lotus is already showing an early beta version of its Freelance Graphics for Windows 95.

The Norton Utilities will also include a much more graphical System Information screen, as well as a new System Doctor for tracking disk space, disk fragmentation, and CPU and memory usage. Another addition is a new version of the SpeedDisk disk cache.

McAfee Associates, Symantec, and other utility vendors are preparing versions of their antivirus programs, as an antivirus scanner is no longer a built-in feature of the operating system. And though Windows 95 includes a disk-compression utility called DriveSpace, you can expect Stac Electronics to update its Stacker to take advantage of things such as long filenames and Plug and Play.

NEW INTERFACE

One of the most important changes that Windows 95 brings to the user interface is a new set of common dialogs. These are the standard boxes that programs use for tasks like Open, Save, and Save As, as well as for changing font settings and performing other common functions. Windows programs don't have to use Windows' common dialogs (in the past, some of Microsoft's own applications haven't), but the boxes are always available for any program to call.

In addition to a more user-friendly layout, the new Windows 95 common dialogs offer important file management features that were unknown in Windows 3.1. These features include the ability to work directly with folders (rather than with physical paths) and to use long filenames. You'll also be able to create new folders on the fly without having to exit a dialog.

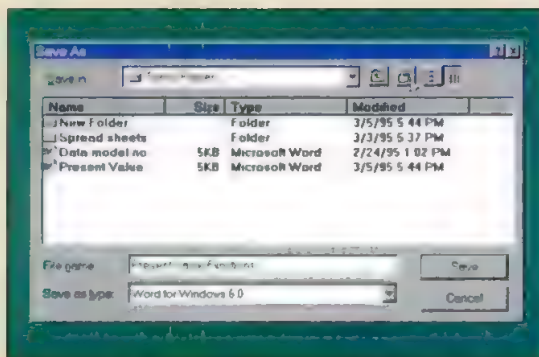
Though these features cover some of the ground that Windows 3.1 left to add-on utilities, you can still expect to see a number of utility vendors offering their own user-interface enhance-

ments and extensions to those in Windows 95. The list of contenders will include Symantec's Norton Navigator (a new product similar to a next-generation XTreeGold for Windows) and Dashboard (originally from Hewlett-Packard, recently acquired by Starfish Software).

Systems Compatibility Corp., which supplies the basic viewers that come with Windows 95, will offer a utility called Outside In/for Windows 95 that offers hundreds of additional file viewers, as well as the ability to print a document from a view.

BIG OPPORTUNITY

Clearly, Windows 95 will bring big changes to the software industry and will pose a special challenge for vendors of system utilities and shell enhancements. At the same time, it spells a big opportunity. Even the most conservative estimates see millions of users moving to the new platform this



New common dialogs that can handle folders and long filenames will be available for all Windows 95 applications.

year and as much as half the Windows installed base switching over in 1996. Many of those people will be making software upgrades that are currently on hold as the industry waits for Windows 95 to ship.

Yes, we'll also go on using some 16-bit applications for quite some time (although they may well start to look and feel increasingly old-fashioned). But not since the appearance of Windows 3.0 has there been such a compelling reason for so many people to evaluate new software. □

Perfect. You can also expect most of these firms to wait at least a few weeks after Windows 95 ships to test compatibility with the final version.

Windows 95 includes a number of features that have been sold in the past as standalone utilities—including disk scanning, remote-node software, and a disk compression utility. But virtually all of the major utility vendors, including Helix, Qualitas, Quarterdeck, Stac, and Symantec, are working on upgrades of their own. For instance, many of The Norton Desktop's current features will be redundant under Windows 95, but Symantec is working on a new version of The Norton Utilities and on Norton Navigator, a new file management utility. Interestingly, some utilities that were part of DOS 6.0, such as an antivirus utility, are not a part of Windows 95 (Symantec also plans to ship its Norton AntiVirus for Windows 95).

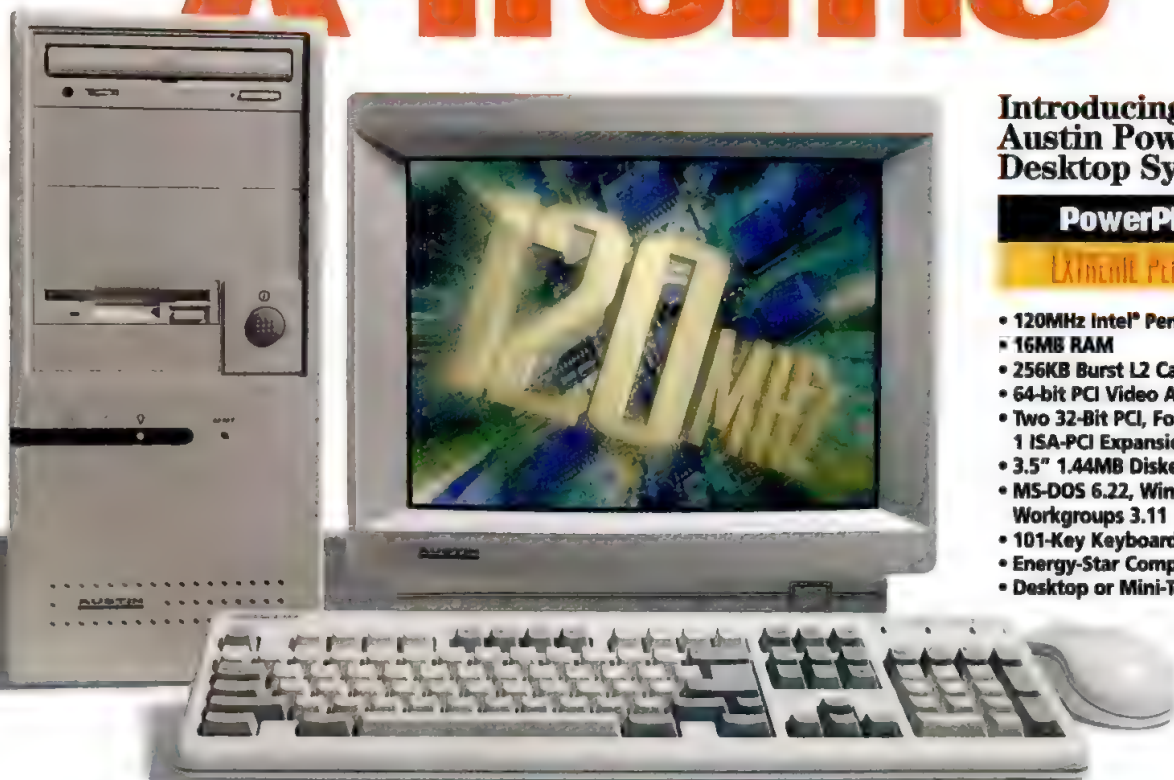
On the hardware front, most PC vendors tell us they have plans to preload Windows 95 on the bulk of their systems as soon as it is available, although many say they will offer alternatives as well. For instance, Compaq announced that Windows 95 will be its "preferred operating system" but said it would continue to offer Windows 3.1 to customers who ask for it.

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

If you already have a system, you'll wonder whether Windows 95 will run on it. The first issue is hardware requirements. Microsoft says that a Windows 95 system requires at least a 386DX processor with 4MB of RAM, but it recommends a 33-MHz 486 with 8MB of RAM. The latter configuration seems like a reasonable minimum to us.

Our preliminary tests on prerelease code show that Windows 95 runs somewhat slower than Windows for Workgroups 3.11 on a 4MB configuration (and probably too slow for most users). But on an 8MB or 16MB system, it performed as fast as or slightly faster than WfWG 3.11, with more marked speed increases noticeable on faster systems (for details, see "The Microsoft Windows 95 Preview Program: Previewing Performance"). As always, it depends on what you are doing. In general, we found Windows 95 to be faster at graph-

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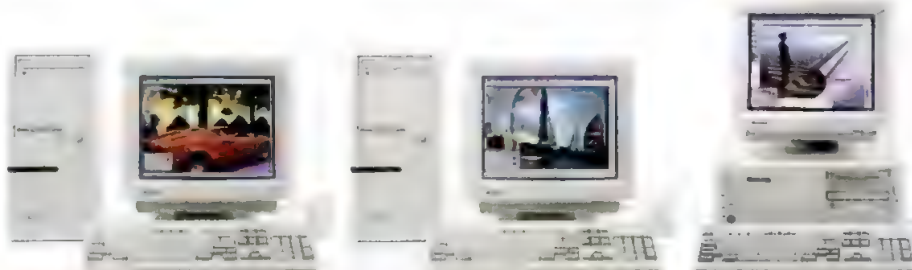
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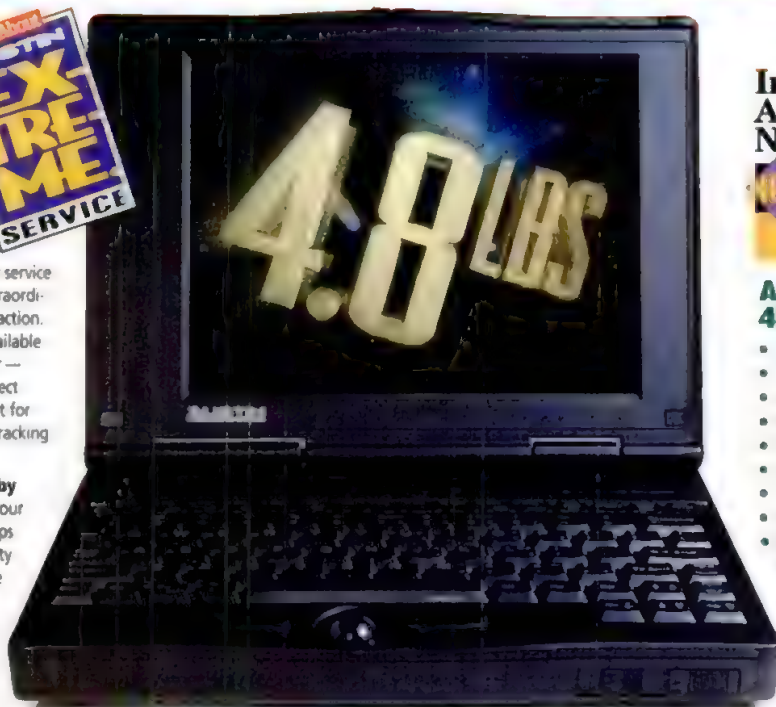
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ics but slower at disk operations than WfWG 3.11.

We recommend 16MB of RAM, particularly if you plan to run multiple applications. In general, Windows 95 system requirements appear to be greater than those of Windows 3.1, about on a par with OS/2 Warp 3's, and well below those of Windows NT 3.5. (For details, refer to "OS/2 Warp 3 and Windows NT 3.5: The Future's Here Today," December 20, 1994).

Windows 95 takes up about 40MB of hard disk space, some 15MB more than Windows 3.1. Applications just seem to get larger, too, so you probably should have at least a 250MB hard disk (before using any compression utility).

COMPATIBILITY

The biggest issue with any new or upgraded operating system is backward compatibility with existing hardware and software. Indeed, compatibility problems have caused most of this year's delays of Windows 95.

The task of ensuring complete compatibility with every available driver, peripheral, and application is daunting and probably impossible, as demonstrated by the problems faced by Windows NT and OS/2 users. (Even though OS/2 has been through several releases and is now extremely compatible with Windows applications and machines, users still run into some compatibility and installation problems.) Some products and combinations will undoubtedly cause problems for Windows 95 users as well.

As Windows 95 is still in testing, it's too early to evaluate compatibility fully. In fact, we won't really know for sure until the operating system is in the hands of millions of users, each with unique hardware and software combinations.

Our preliminary tests show good but not perfect compatibility. Most applications ran well on our configurations, including the 13 top-selling Windows applications that are part of our Winstone 95 benchmark test suite and several

more challenging ones, such as id Software's DOOM, Brøderbund's Myst, and Traveling Software's Laplink V for DOS. But we did run into difficulties with Lotus Freelance Graphics for Windows, and we were unable to get Windows 95 to work properly with PCMCIA modems on the Hewlett-Packard Omnibook 600. We also ran into occasional TCP/IP conflicts. We were most likely to

run into system crashes when working with existing device drivers that run in real mode.

THE BOTTOM LINE

For many people, the choice of moving to Windows 95 will be made for them by their hardware vendors, which appear to be getting on the

bandwagon in ever larger numbers. Windows 95 is also receiving broad support from the bulk of software vendors, although we expect many to support and enhance their applications for Windows 3.1, as well.

On the whole, in terms of performance and general architecture, Windows 95 promises to finish about even with OS/2 Warp; it is considerably more powerful and sophisticated than Windows 3.1. Not surprisingly, it beats Windows NT's performance, but it lacks many of Windows NT's sophisticated features such as symmetric multiprocessing support, advanced task protection, and C2-level security. At this stage, compatibility remains an open question; the early indications are good.

The sheer size of the Windows installed base and the huge amount of Windows software clearly elevate the release of Windows 95 to a defining moment. It's also clear that, despite many built-in compromises, Windows 95 marks a major advance over its predecessor in terms of user interface, utilities, architecture, configuration, and networking. But Windows 95 is not your only choice. In order to match the popularity of Windows 3.1, the final release of Windows 95 will have to deliver what the current beta can only promise. □

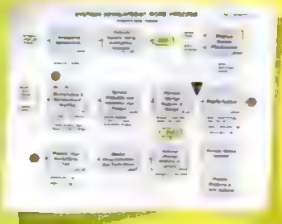
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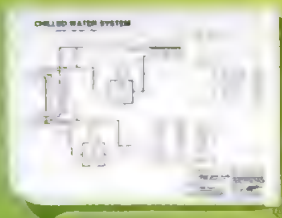
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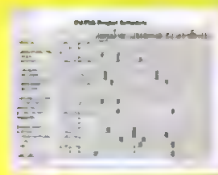


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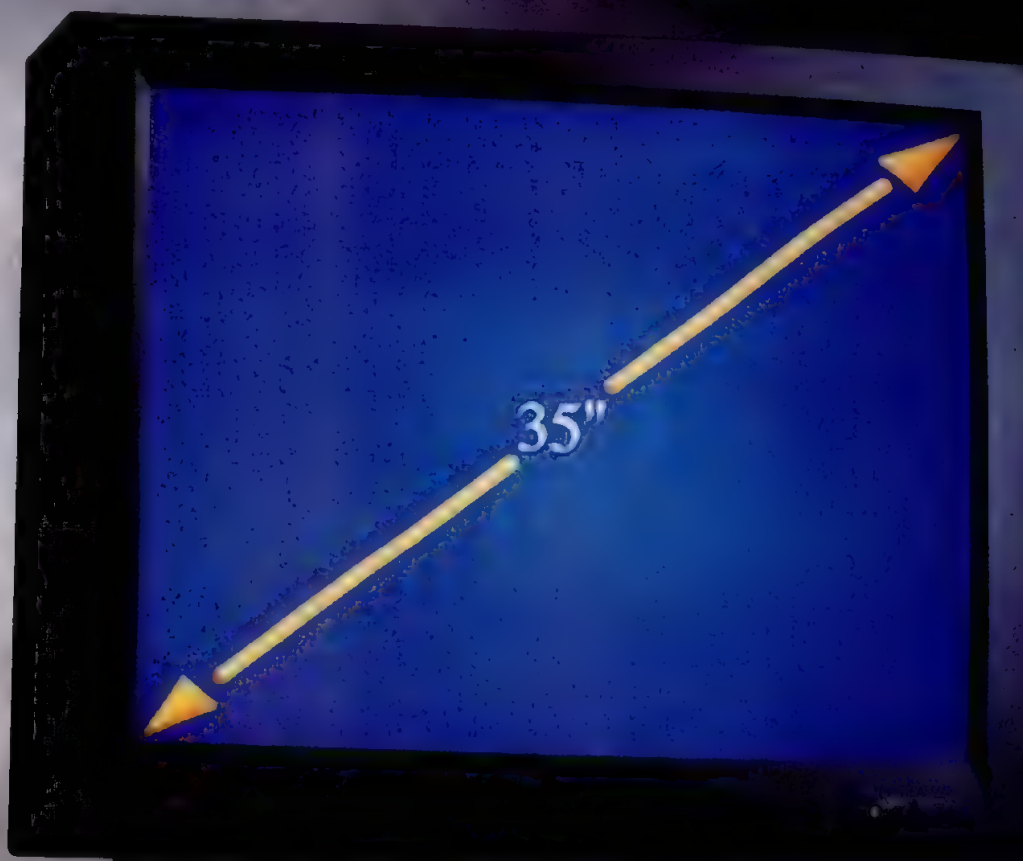
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UNDER THE HOOD

Windows 95

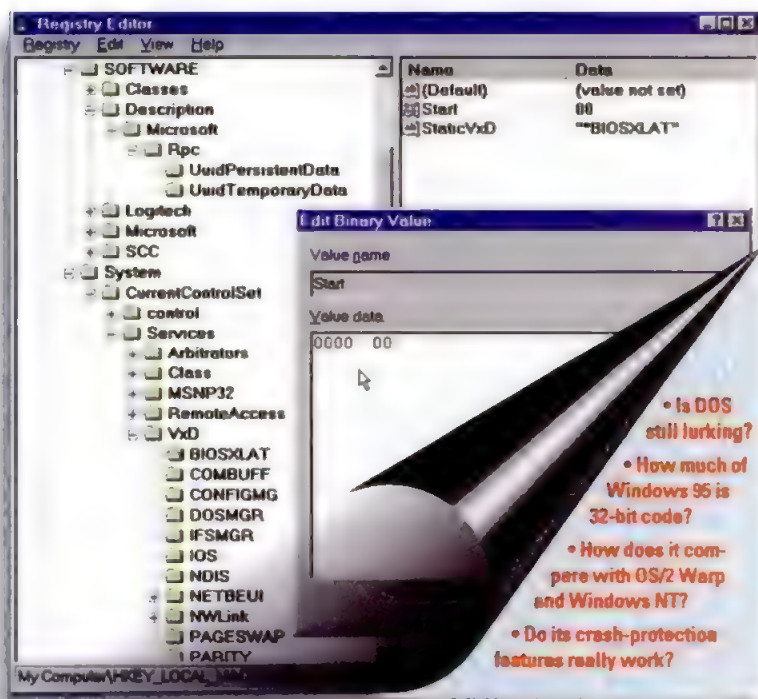
And Its Competitors

Months before its release, Windows 95 is already the subject of raging debate among advocates of 32-bit operating systems. The fundamental question: Is it or isn't it? Is Windows 95 a full-fledged 32-bit OS like Windows NT and OS/2, or is it merely a warmed-over version of 16-bit Windows 3.1?

A year ago, we knew only what Microsoft would tell us or what we could glean from very early developer prereleases (see "Chicago: Under Construction," April 12, 1994). Today we know much more. We see a solid operating system that improves on Windows 3.1 in several ways. Still, it is clearly not the "NT Lite" some hoped it would be. Architecturally, Windows 95 resembles Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups 3.11 more than it resembles Windows NT or IBM's OS/2 (see "Modern Architecture"). That's good from the standpoint of compatibility with existing DOS and Windows applications, but it means that some of the baggage found in

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What kind of operating system is Windows 95, anyway? Technical analysis and comparison offers the only unbiased answer.

By Jeff Prosis

Windows 3.1 will be with us for some time yet.

On the outside, Windows 95 has a very different look from Windows 3.1. On the inside, parts of it are very new, but other parts remain fundamentally unaltered. Here is a critical assessment of Windows 95's foundation and how it compares with that of Windows 3.1, Windows NT, and OS/2.

THE BIG PICTURE

From an architectural perspective, Windows 95 represents the next logical step in the evolution of Windows rather than a radical break with the past. The greatest enhancements include support for 32-bit Windows executables, preemptive multitasking of 32-bit applications, support for multithreaded applications, private address spaces for 32-bit applications, inte-

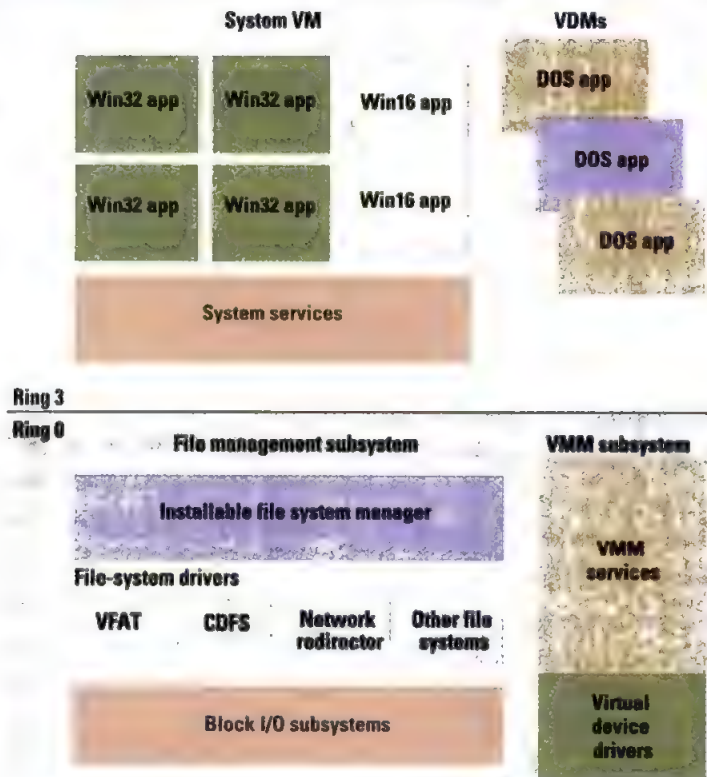
grated support for file I/O functions formerly handled by DOS, a new file system that remains compatible with the old while supporting long filenames, and an installable file system manager with 32-bit file-system drivers for local, CD-ROM, and network drives. Throw in other enhancements (such as better resource handling and a flat memory-addressing scheme) and the total is an architecture that is superior

MODERN ARCHITECTURE *An inside look at the design of Windows 95,*

WINDOWS 95

The **system VM** (virtual machine) is where all Windows 95 applications execute. Much of the operating system's code and data is also located here. Win32 applications are preemptively multitasked and run within private address spaces, theoretically enhancing reliability. All Win16 programs execute as a single process in a common address space and are cooperatively multitasked. The DLLs USER, USER32, GDI, GDI32, KERNEL, and KERNEL32, which provide operating **system services** to all Windows applications, are loaded into the system VM and mapped into the address space of each process. This boosts performance by eliminating costly ring transitions when system services are called. It also compromises system integrity by exposing parts of the operating system to application programs. Virtual DOS machines (**VDMs**) are where DOS applications execute. They are preemptively multitasked.

The **file management subsystem** runs in ring 0 and handles all file I/O calls. Most calls are handled in protected mode, but some still

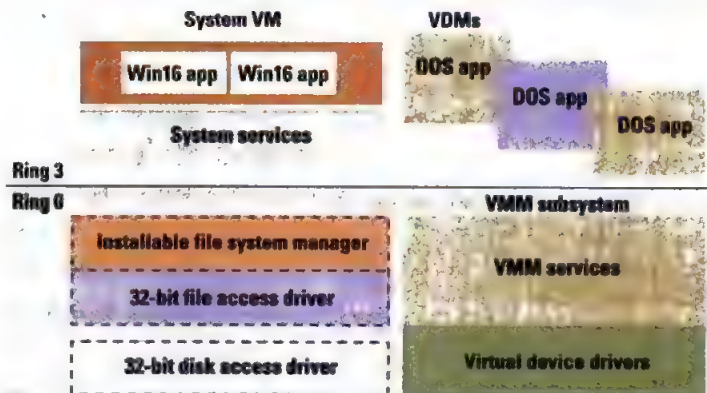


switch to Virtual 86 mode to be handled by real-mode DOS code. The **installable file system manager** routes file I/O calls to the appropriate file-system driver. The **VFAT** file-system driver implements Windows 95's VFAT file system, which is similar to the FAT file system with added support for long filenames. The **CDFS** driver replaces MSCDEX and handles input from CD-ROM drives. The **network redirector** file-system driver provides the interface to network drives. Additional file-system drivers may be installed. The block I/O subsystem performs physical disk I/O in response to requests from the file-system drivers.

The virtual machine management (**VMM**) subsystem provides low-level services such as thread scheduling and memory management. It also includes **virtual device drivers** (VxDs) for hardware such as the mouse, keyboard, video adapter, and programmable interrupt controller.

WINDOWS 3.1

The **system VM** hosts all Win16 programs as well as the code and data in system DLLs that provide operating-system services. Win16 programs run in a shared address space within the system VM, where one crashed app can easily corrupt others. Win16 programs are cooperatively multitasked. The system DLLs USER, GDI, and KERNEL provide operating-system services to Windows applications and are mapped into the address space shared by Win16 programs. DOS applications run in separate virtual DOS machines (**VDMs**), which are preemptively multitasked.



The **installable file system manager** and the **32-bit file access driver** (only in Windows for Workgroups 3.11) handle most file operations in protected mode, speeding file accesses. When loaded, the **32-bit disk access driver** handles physical disk I/O.

The virtual machine management (**VMM**) subsystem provides low-level services such as VM scheduling and memory management to the operating system. It also includes **virtual device drivers** (VxDs) for hardware devices.

to present-day Windows and bears comparison with OS/2 but that falls short of the more robust architecture of Windows NT.

Windows 95 uses two rings, or levels, of the four-ring Intel x86 protection model: ring 3, where applications and the dynamic link libraries (DLLs) that provide OS services run, and ring 0, where the low-level components of the OS reside. This arrangement, similar to that of Windows 3.1 and

OS/2, isolates critical OS components from applications. It provides nominally greater stability than a DOS environment, where wayward applications frequently write into areas of memory they don't own and can corrupt the OS itself.

Ring 3 hosts the virtual machines (VMs) in which applications execute. All Windows applications, including 16-bit programs developed for Windows 3.1, run

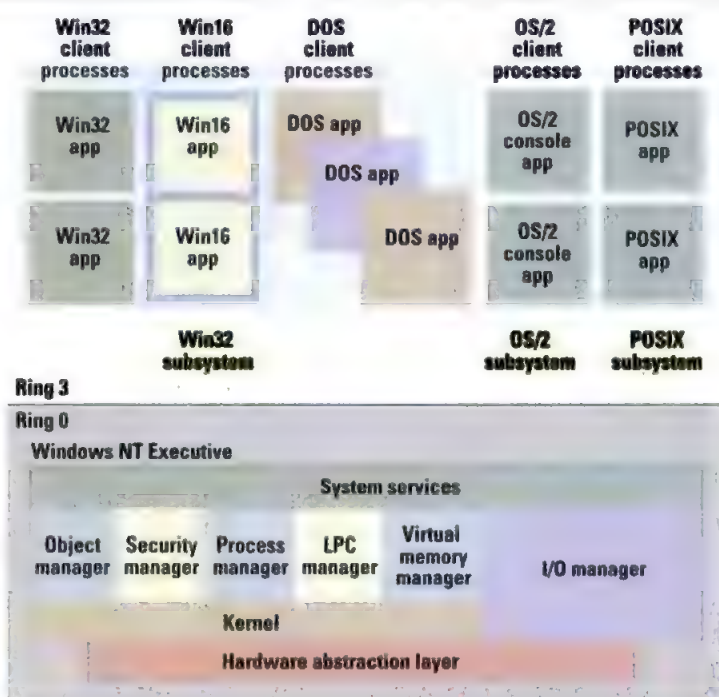
in the system VM. MS-DOS applications run in separate VMs known as virtual DOS machines (VDMs). Virtual machines provide protection against crashes by preventing applications executing in one VM from seeing applications executing in another and writing into each other's address spaces. As far as an application is concerned, a process executing in another VM may as well be running on another PC. (A

Windows 3.1, Windows NT, and OS/2 Warp from the architect's perspective.

WINDOWS NT

Windows NT utilizes a client/server model in which application programs (clients) each invoke services (servers) indirectly via local procedure calls (LPCs) implemented by Windows NT Executive's **LPC Manager**. Win32 applications execute as separate multitasked processes consisting of the application, its address space, and the associated system resources. The **Win32 subsystem** services Win32 API calls executed by client processes and performs I/O on behalf of other subsystems. Win16 applications can run as single processes in a shared VM or in private address spaces, providing them with greater protection from other Win16 programs.

DOS applications are executed as separate processes in separate virtual DOS machines (VDMs). The machine environment within a VDM is designed to mimic the real-mode DOS environment as closely as possible. **OS/2** and **POSIX subsystems** support



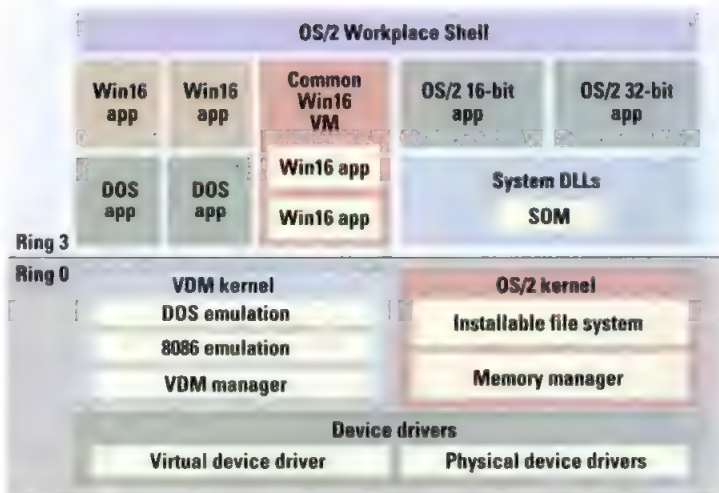
OS/2 console applications and POSIX applications.

The **Windows NT Executive** provides the operating system services required by the subsystems in ring 3 and manages all internal aspects of the system, such as thread scheduling and memory management. The system services layer serves as the interface between processes in ring 3 and the Windows NT Executive in ring 0.

The **kernel** processes interrupts and exceptions, schedules threads, synchronizes processors in multiprocessor environments, and performs other low-level chores in support of the Executive. The **I/O manager** controls device input and output and provides file system support. The **hardware abstraction layer** performs physical I/O, providing device independence for the I/O manager.

OS/2 WARP

OS/2 provides a variety of application VMs. Native 32-bit and 16-bit OS/2 applications execute in separate preemptively multitasked VMs and can intercommunicate via OS/2's DDE. DOS and Win16 applications can be launched in separate multitasked VMs; Win16 apps in separate VMs can maintain full DDE and OLE 2.0 links with each other and DDE links with 32-bit OS/2 applications. You can also run multiple Win16 applications in a **common Win16 VM**, where they are cooperatively multitasked. A variety of OS/2 API services including **SOM** (System Object Model) services are provided by **system DLLs**



that can be called without a costly ring transition. The **OS/2 Workplace Shell**, executing at the application level, provides a true object-oriented user interface.

The **OS/2 kernel** provides many basic API services, file-system support, memory management, and the hardware interrupt manager. The virtual DOS machine kernel (or **VDM kernel**) provides DOS emulation, 8086 emulation, and VDM management. **Virtual device drivers** (VxDs) provide hardware abstraction; **physical device drivers** interface directly with the hardware layer.

process is a running application, its address space, and its resources.) Theoretically, it's difficult for a DOS application to bring down Windows 95 by intruding upon code and data owned by something else. In practice, however, it's quite easy for a DOS program to crash the system, because some memory is global to all VMs.

The system VM is unique among VMs in that it hosts multiple concurrent processes. Windows 95 applications (those written to the Win32 API) are isolated from one another in private address spaces supervised by the memory manager running in ring 0. Windows 3.1 applications (those written to the Win16 API) run in an address space shared by all active Win16 apps. Thus, Win16 programs operate in essentially the same environment that they ran in under Windows 3.1: They can see each other, but they can't see their Win32 counterparts. (In contrast, OS/2 and Windows NT 3.5 can run Win16 apps in private address spaces, providing better protection and marginally better multitasking.)

Win16 programs are still cooperatively multitasked as they were in Windows 3.1, but Win32 applications are preemptively multitasked. So by just upgrading to 32-bit versions of your applications, you'll get a smoother-running system. Until you replace those 16-bit applications, however, Windows 95 won't divvy up processor time any better than Windows 3.1.

Within the private address space allocated to a Win32 process, the application has a 4GB view of memory. The application is loaded in the lower half of the address space, normally at the 4MB mark. DLLs mapped into the process's address space are loaded between 2GB and 3GB, with the upper gigabyte reserved for system DLLs and virtual device drivers (VxDs). The system DLLs GDI, GDI32, USER, USER32, KERNEL, and KERNEL32—the 16- and 32-bit halves of the GDI, USER, and KERNEL modules present in Windows since Version 1.0—provide services to the OS. GDI and GDI32 are primarily responsible for output to the screen and printer, USER and USER32

for window management, and KERNEL and KERNEL32 for the management of memory, processes, and threads. Placing these components of the OS in ring 3 enhances performance by minimizing time-consuming ring transitions. It also makes them somewhat vulnerable to applications that write to areas of memory they shouldn't. This is an Achilles heel that Windows NT proponents are quick to point out when explaining why Windows NT is slower than Windows or OS/2.

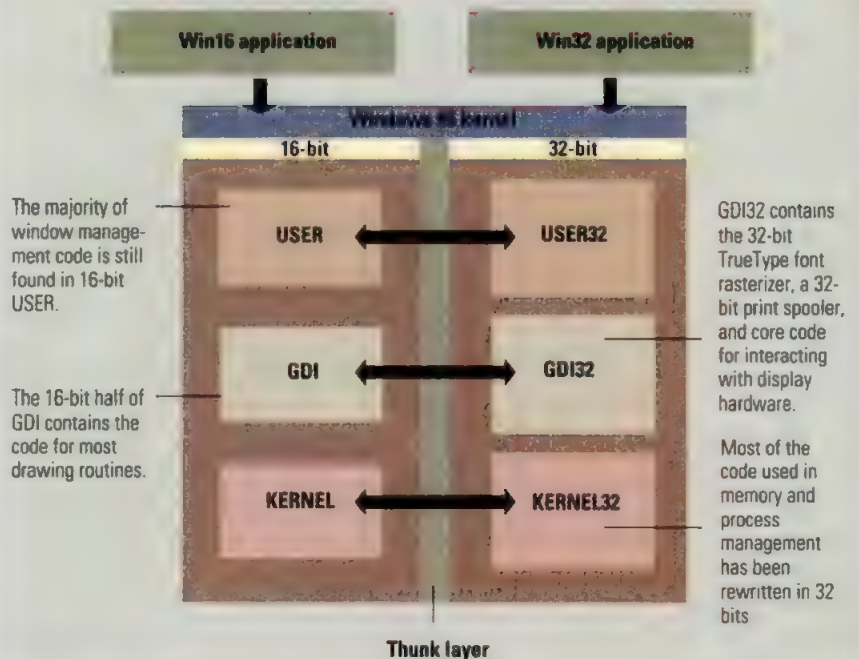
This aspect of the architecture is fundamentally different from Windows NT, which isolates ring 3 OS code and data in protected subsystems that run in address spaces separate from the applications. Using a client/server message-passing mechanism implemented in the Windows NT Executive, Windows NT applications ("clients") invoke OS services in the Win32 subsystem (the "server") indirectly and cannot access the memory owned by the subsystem. Because OS code is either mapped into a separate address space or

protected in ring 0, it is virtually impossible for an application to compromise the system. This design is the main reason that Windows NT is so extraordinarily stable. Even OS/2 can't boast such stability, though it does play tricks with selectors (values loaded into segment registers in protected mode to access areas of memory) to protect OS components in ring 3.

Drop down to ring 0 in Windows 95 and you'll find the virtual machine management (VMM) subsystem—which includes a group of VxDs—and the file management subsystem. The VMM and its drivers work together to virtualize hardware such as the keyboard, mouse, and interrupt controller and to perform low-level operations such as scheduling threads for processor time and paging memory to and from the hard disk. The VMM subsystem is not new in Windows 95, but its role has been expanded.

The ring 0 file management subsystem is new to Windows 95, although elements of it were also present in Windows for Workgroups 3.11. This subsystem is heavily layered, with the installable file system (IFS) manager at the top, file system drivers in the middle, and the multitiered block I/O subsystem (which manages

WINDOWS 95 SYSTEM DLLS: THE 16-BIT/32-BIT DIVISION OF LABOR



Our Contributors: CHARLES PETZOLD and JEFF PROSISE are contributing editors of *PC Magazine*. ANDREW SCHULMAN is the author of *Unauthorized Windows 95*. THOMAS MACE was the associate editor in charge of this story, and JAY MUNRO was the project leader.

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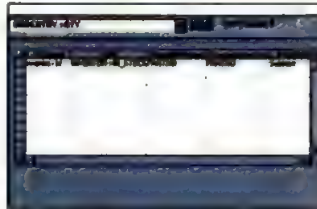
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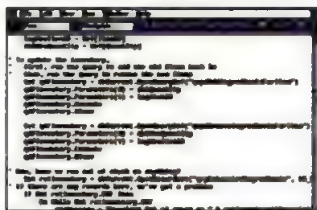
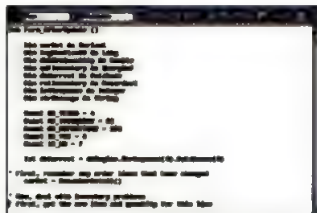
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ABR

• DOS Is Dead? Look Again

By Andrew Schulman

Microsoft is careful never to claim that Windows 95 is a Windows NT derivative. Still, the company has left many developers, computer journalists, and end users with the impression that it is a ground-up rewrite of Windows 3.x with an architecture that's closer to Windows NT than to the old Windows DOS combination.

To cite just one example, the February 1994 issue of the *Microsoft Systems Journal* (page 20) states that "Windows no longer can be likened to a fancy paint job on an old MS-DOS Yugo. Because the entire operating system is freshly designed from the ground up, you now have killer features such as threads, memory-mapped files, and asynch I/O."

In my view, for better or for worse, Windows 95 is far from being an "NT Lite." Instead, Windows 95's structure is quite closely related to the architecture behind Windows 3.x 386 Enhanced mode. Yes, Microsoft has made many improvements to this under-

lying foundation (including threads and so forth), but Windows 95 remains fundamentally closer to the combination of Windows for Workgroups 3.11 and Win32s than to Windows NT.

STUDY YOUR WINDOWS 3.X

Particularly crucial to understanding Windows 95 is understanding the Windows 3.x Enhanced mode virtual machine manager (which provides APIs such as Hook_V86_Int_Chain, Begin_Nest_V86_Exec, and Allocate_V86_Break_Point) and virtual device drivers (such as IFS-MGR, IOS, VWIN32, VPICD, V86MMGR, and DOSMGR). For details, see my book *Unauthorized Windows 95* (IDG Books Worldwide, 1994).

Windows 95's relation to MS-DOS is the same as that of Windows 3.x Enhanced mode to MS-DOS. Specifically: Windows 95 does not replace DOS, use DOS solely for compatibility with old DOS applications, or rely on DOS solely to boot up. Even Win32 applications

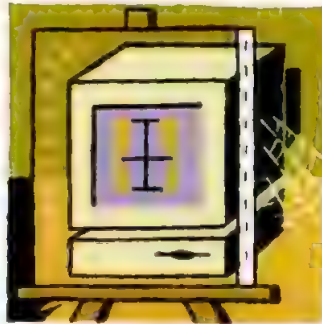
under Windows 95 will employ DOS for some operations, such as getting and setting the current program segment prefix (PSP, a DOS data structure that acts as a process identifier), the date and time, and the current drive.

At the same time, even DOS apps running under Windows 95 will bypass DOS for file operations (much as Windows for Workgroups 3.11 provides 32-bit file access). And Windows 95 provides memory-mapped file I/O. This new feature is a good example of what bypassing DOS *really* looks like.

WANTING TO BELIEVE

Clearly, many developers and users want to believe that DOS is gone. Indeed, it is easy to blame DOS (and real mode) for all problems and instabilities. They think that if DOS is gone, somehow their systems will automatically be more stable. Windows 95 may or may not be more reliable than Windows 3.x, but DOS is still there—just as in Windows 3.x.

In response to *Unauthorized Windows 95*, Microsoft has downplayed the importance of the Windows 95 architecture. For example, Rogers Weed, group product manager for Windows 95, told *Computer Reseller News* (January 2, 1995, page 3) that "I don't think [the architectural details] make a difference to most customers."



The industry
must bring
its expectations
in line
with reality.

input and output to the storage devices) at the bottom. Windows 95's native VFAT file system is supported by a file-system driver, as is the new compact disk file system (CDFS), whose driver replaces the MSCDEX CD-ROM driver on systems equipped with CD-ROM drives.

Network redirectors are also supported at this level in the hierarchy, and third parties may add support for additional file systems by providing the requisite file-system drivers. It's entirely possible, for example, that someone will write High-Performance File System (HPFS) and NT File System (NTFS) drivers, enabling Windows 95 users to utilize disk partitions

formatted by OS/2 or Windows NT. By contrast, only Microsoft could realistically augment Windows 3.1 with nonnative file systems, because the only hooks are undocumented interfaces hidden deep inside real-mode DOS.

MULTITASKING AND MULTITHREADING

To divide processor time among active Windows applications, Windows 3.1 uses a crude scheduling mechanism known as *cooperative multitasking*. Applications are never forced to yield the CPU to other applications; they yield voluntarily when they call messaging functions in USER to retrieve messages and the message queue

is empty. This works reasonably well, because a typical Windows application spins in a continuous cycle, retrieving and dispatching messages and often processing several messages a second. Still, a poorly written application can spoil the party for everyone by engaging in a lengthy processing task and failing to check its message queue for an extended period of time.

Like Windows NT and OS/2, Windows 95 solves this problem with a preemptive scheduler that distributes CPU time at the behest of the OS rather than the applications. Scheduling is performed on a per-thread basis. A *thread* is the atomic unit of execution; it is literally a piece of execut-

This is indeed odd. If Windows 95's relationship to DOS doesn't matter, why the many claims that Windows 95 eliminates DOS, that it is a brand-new integrated operating system, and so on? One reason may be that these claims help Microsoft justify its hefty price hike to OEMs. Another may have to do with the word *integrated* itself, since the proposed antitrust consent decree between Microsoft and the U.S. Department of Justice explicitly excludes "integrated products" from its clauses.

Whatever the reasons for Microsoft's claims, the truth about the architecture of Windows 95 does matter to users and developers. As one example, several beta testers have noticed that even in a *pure* Windows 95 configuration running only Win32 apps, they can't start any more apps if all DOS memory is allocated by a piggish device driver. This is because each Win32 app running in Windows 95 requires some DOS memory for its PSP.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Windows 95 is an excellent product, but the industry must bring its expectations in line with the realities of the design. Otherwise, when Windows 95 finally ships—hopefully in 1995—it could face a nasty backlash from those who believed in NT Lite only to find they have Windows 4.0 lashed together with MS-DOS 7.0. □

ing code. The primary scheduler, which is part of the VMM subsystem, pauses every 20 milliseconds (by default) to reevaluate the status of each active thread and determine which thread gets the processor next. Individual time-slices may be divided among two or more threads by a secondary scheduler that works with the primary scheduler to ensure that the CPU is utilized as efficiently as possible.

Win16 and MS-DOS apps are limited to one thread each, but Win32 processes may spawn additional threads. Secondary threads are useful for performing asynchronous tasks in the background, such as buffering input from a serial port, recom-

puting the values in a spreadsheet, or spooling data to a printer. Writing an app that performs background processing requires a great deal more effort in Windows 3.1, and the results are rarely as satisfactory, because of the built-in limitations of the scheduler. With Windows 95, Windows users will finally experience the superior multitasking that Windows NT and OS/2 users have enjoyed for years. Applications will be more responsive and hour-glass cursors less common.

Win16 applications in Windows 95 are still multitasked the old way, running much as they do under Windows 3.1. But though a Win16 app can freeze other Win16 apps by going too long without dipping into the message queue, this alone will not visibly affect Win32 applications. The Win32 apps will continue to receive their time-slices, just as background VDMs do under Windows 3.1 today. OS/2 has an option permitting Win16 apps to run in separate sessions (virtual machines), meaning those apps can be multitasked preemptively just like native 32-bit apps. If you plan to run Win16 programs for a while, this is a feature you'll want.

OS/2's one weakness in multitasking is its serialized input queue. Messages generated from mouse and keyboard events wait in a single, system-wide input queue to be retrieved by applications. If one application fails to retrieve input messages, others may be prevented from retrieving them also. When this occurs, it is typically debilitating enough that the user can't even switch away from the offending application, because the message signaling the switch gets stuck in the queue behind all the others.

Windows 95 and Windows NT circumvent this problem by providing each application with a private input queue, a technique known as *deserialization*. A Windows 95 or Windows NT application that goes for an extended period of time without retrieving messages will stop responding to input but won't prevent other programs from responding, and it won't prevent you from switching to another application. OS/2 programmers can avoid serialization problems by making sure their apps are written properly, however. If an application can't process a message quickly, it should use a message pump to keep the messages flowing or delegate the job to a secondary thread.

THE API

An OS's inner functions are accessed by its applications through the application programming interface, or API. An API is a set of subroutine-like procedures called *functions* that programs can call to open files, allocate memory, and perform other routine tasks. In Windows 95, these functions are implemented in GDI, GDI32, USER, USER32, KERNEL, KERNEL32, and other DLLs. Since these DLLs are mapped into each process's address space, calling an API function amounts to little more than executing a CALL instruction to the proper location in memory.

The API is an important part of an OS's architecture, because it defines how programs will interact with the system. It is also one of the primary factors that decides who will support a new OS. Today's APIs are complex, often comprising a thousand or more functions and requiring a year or more of full-time study to master. Force programmers to learn a new API and you run the risk that no one will develop applications for your platform, especially if competing platforms with familiar APIs are outselling yours ten to one. That's one solid reason Windows applications far outnumber OS/2 apps.

Windows 95 uses the Win32 API, which is a 32-bit version of the 16-bit Windows 3.1 API and is native to Windows NT. A simple port of a Windows 3.1 application to Windows 95 generally requires no more than a few days; porting from Windows NT (or the little-used Win32s subsystem that converts Windows 3.1 into a 32-bit platform) requires even less. Many Windows NT applications, in fact, run unchanged under Windows 95. And if you were prescient enough to write your Windows 3.1 application in C++ using the Microsoft Foundation Class (MFC) library, porting could be as simple as loading up the source code and recompiling.

Of course, a simple port generally isn't enough. Most developers coming from Windows 3.1 will want to take advantage of Windows 95's new features, such as multithreading, memory-mapped files, and the common controls library (new controls provided in a DLL that supplement the built-in control classes). Adding support for such features often impacts the structure of your program and requires more than just a rewrite. For this reason, upgrades to some

popular applications will lag behind the release of Windows 95 by several months.

How does Windows 95's version of the Win32 API square with the Windows NT version? Each supports some features that the other doesn't, but there is a very high degree of overlap. Windows 95 doesn't support Windows NT's security and event-logging functions, but it includes new functions for image color matching and other operations that Windows NT doesn't. Contrary to some press reports that describe Windows 95's API as a subset of Windows NT's, Windows 95 expands the Win32 API; neither Windows 95 nor Windows NT currently provides the 32-bit Windows API implementation. But because the bulk of the API is common to both, it is now possible for developers to support Windows 95 and Windows NT users with a single code base (for further discussion, see "Windows 95: The Programmer's Challenge").

OLE: THE API'S OTHER HALF

Unfortunately for developers, the Win32 API is only half the story. To qualify to use the Windows 95 logo, developers of most applications will have to add Object Linking and Embedding (OLE) 2.0 support. OLE is a vast, complex, and (by most programmers) poorly understood protocol that is very different from what most Windows programmers are accustomed to. OLE programming is orders of magnitude easier if you work in C++ and take advantage of the substantial OLE support built into the Microsoft Foundation Classes (MFC), but the majority of Windows applications today are still written in C. That will change, but for now OLE presents a major obstacle to many developers.

The driving force behind OLE is the notion that interoperability among applications can be taken to a higher level if code and data are encapsulated in objects; applications that use those objects can then interact with them using standard interfaces. OLE defines protocols for in-place editing, drag-and-drop data transfers, structured storage, custom controls, and more.

OLE faces competition from OpenDoc

and System Object Model (SOM), but if Windows is ever to become a fully object-oriented, document-centric OS, OLE is the vehicle that will get it there. The Component Object Model technology upon which OLE is based is being woven into the fabric of Cairo, the fabled successor to Windows NT. If so, OLE is on its way to becoming not just an extension of the API, but an integral part of the OS architecture.

*So why is Microsoft
willing to settle
for any 16-bit code in
Windows 95? Was this a
conscious decision?*

Windows 95 makes it abundantly clear that Microsoft sees OLE as more than a tool for applications developers. Many of the functions of the user interface shell are accessed through OLE interfaces in what may be a preview of things to

come. DLLs can now provide document icons to the shell on the fly by registering to be notified whenever an icon is displayed; this is designed to strengthen the bond between documents and applications.

Windows programming is changing—and fast. The underlying API is becoming less important than which class library you use. To write first-class Windows 95 applications, even some of the more experienced Win32 developers will find themselves wading through stacks of new programming documentation describing obscure interfaces that are unrelated to the API. It may not be pleasant, but it'll be a fact of life. Programmers willing to bite the bullet and adapt to the new order now will save themselves a lot of time and trouble down the road.

16-BIT VS. 32-BIT CODE

It's no secret that Windows 95, unlike Windows NT (and, to a lesser extent, OS/2), is no thoroughbred 32-bit OS. Some of the 16-bit code from Windows 3.1 still resides in GDI, USER, and KERNEL. Most of KERNEL has been rewritten with 32-bit code and renamed KERNEL32, but about half of what was formerly GDI and almost all of USER is still 16-bit. How much of a problem does this present for users? How does it affect performance? And does it matter that an OS written for 386, 486, and Pentium

CPUs still relies partially on 16-bit code?

First, let's clarify the difference between 16- and 32-bit code. Prior to the 386, Intel processors were built primarily to deal with 16-bit quantities. For example, a pair of 16-bit numbers could be multiplied with a single instruction, but multiplying two 32-bit numbers required perhaps 15 to 20 instructions. More important, memory could be addressed efficiently in chunks of up to 64K, but dealing with larger expanses of memory required more extraordinary measures. Merely increasing the size of an array from 64K to 65K in a C program could easily halve the program's speed (or worse).

The 386 fixed this by increasing the width of the CPU's registers from 16 bits to 32 bits and by upgrading the instruction set to handle 32-bit quantities. Programs could now multiply 32-bit numbers with a single instruction and address areas of memory as large as 4GB with ease. Since a 386 will execute 16-bit instructions, a programmer writing code for it can choose between 16- and 32-bit code (or even mix the two together). The latter is superior when dealing with 32-bit quantities and large regions of memory, but it offers no advantage when dealing with 16-bit data.

Sixteen-bit code is not inherently bad. It can be as fast as or faster than 32-bit code, depending on what the code is designed to do and how well it is written. The 16-bit portions of the system won't be a drag on performance if they stay within the bounds of what 16-bit code can do efficiently. If 16-bit code is isolated in 16-bit code segments, and 32-bit code in 32-bit code segments, the use of 16-bit code won't swell the code size either. (16-bit code and 32-bit code occupy the same amount of space unless they're mixed together in the same segment, in which case one must be expanded in order to differentiate it from the other.)

Still, it's a little disconcerting to learn that an OS designed for 32-bit processors contains 16-bit code at all. So why is Microsoft willing to settle for any 16-bit code? Is this the result of a conscious design decision, or is Microsoft simply trying to put the best face on a mediocre design?

Probably a little of both. Microsoft admits that the problem was partially one of resources: The company felt it didn't have the time to rewrite everything using 32 bits. In retrospect, given the delays, maybe it could've taken the time. But another factor



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in the decision was compatibility with existing applications. Some of the 16-bit code in USER is so idiosyncratic that Microsoft feared a ground-up rewrite would inevitably break a number of Win16 applications. Some efficiency may be gained by allowing Win16 apps to call directly into the 16-bit GDI, USER, and KERNEL and avoid thunking to 32 bits. (*Thunking* is the mechanism used to call 32-bit code from 16-bit code, or vice versa, and to translate the parameters that accompany the calls.)

This efficiency is offset by the fact that some of the calls made by Win32 apps must now be thunked down to 16 bits, something that isn't necessary in Windows NT and OS/2. Microsoft programmers have gone to great pains to maximize thunking efficiency, but thunking still takes time. Win32 apps can't help but run slightly slower because of the 16/32-bit division of labor in the OS kernel.

The diagram "Windows 95 System DLLs: The 16-Bit/32-Bit Division of Labor" illustrates the 16/32-bit code dichotomy. The 16-bit GDI, USER, and KERNEL and the 32-bit GDI32, USER32, and KERNEL32 are separated by a thunking layer that facilitates calls back and forth. When a Win32 application calls an API function, the call is received on the 32-bit side but may eventually execute code in GDI, USER, or KERNEL. Conversely, Win16 apps that invoke API function calls into the 16-bit half of the kernel may be thunked internally to GDI32, USER32, or KERNEL32.

On the surface, there's nothing wrong with this arrangement—especially for an OS that is designed to run both 16- and 32-bit apps. But the 16-bit code in the kernel presents something of a problem because it is *nonreentrant*, meaning two threads cannot access it at the same time without risking a nasty system crash. This isn't a big deal in Windows 3.1, because Windows apps are not preemptively multitasked. But it's a grave concern in Windows 95, where processes *are* preempted and any thread is likely to be interrupted at any point during its execution.

As Adrian King documented in his book *Inside Windows 95* (Microsoft Press, 1994), Microsoft explored a number of solutions to this problem before finally deciding upon the Win16Mutex. (A *mutex* is a flag that warns threads away from the

16-bit kernel when another thread is executing code there.) Win32 threads that wish to call across to the 16-bit side must stop what they're doing if the flag is raised. Significantly, a Win32 thread sets this flag only when it enters and leaves the 16-bit kernel, but threads devoted to Win16 processes force the flag to be set the whole time they're active.

The result? Win32 apps may be less responsive when Win16 apps are running, and a Win16 app that locks up may lock up Win32 apps, too. This is in stark contrast to Windows NT and OS/2, where 16-bit apps have no effect on 32-bit apps other than the CPU time they consume.

Exactly how much the Win16Mutex bottleneck will affect Win32 processes is still unclear. (*PC Magazine* will compare the performance of 32-bit applications with and without Win16 apps running later this year, when final Windows 95 code is available.) What is clear is that you'll get better performance from Windows 95 if you run only 32-bit applications.

The system DLLs aren't the only components of Windows 95 in which 16-bit code and data can be found. As Andrew Schulman notes in his book *Unauthorized Windows 95* (IDG Books Worldwide, 1994), Windows 95 still relies on several 16-bit DOS data structures and at times

Windows 95: The Programmer's Challenge

By Charles Petzold

Writing good application code is tough enough. Revising or rewriting that code for new operating systems and application programming interfaces (APIs) can be pure torture. Programmers should be able to expand their knowledge of existing APIs rather than continually having to learn completely new ones.

Fortunately for programmers, the evolution of Windows over the past decade has been fairly smooth in this regard. As versions of Windows have expanded in functionality, they have also retained much backward compatibility. An application written for Windows 1.0 in 1985 would require minimal changes (if any) to run under Windows 3.1 in 1995. It might look a bit quaint, but it would still run.

But the move from the 16-bit architecture of early Windows to a 32-bit interface is the biggest leap yet. Using 32-bit memory management and integers can provide programs with improved efficiency that simply cannot be ignored. This move to 32 bits has a long history—with Microsoft providing programmers with an unsettling variety of 32-bit solutions.

First there was something called

WINMEM32, a dynamic link library that allowed programmers to write some (but not all) of their Windows 3.0 code using a 32-bit address space. Then there was a Windows 3.1 API called Win32s (s for subset), an interim 32-bit API that eased the transition to Windows NT and Windows 95 but fell short of the Win32 API defined for Windows NT. Then came Win32c (c for compatible), an API that Microsoft initially defined and then abandoned for Windows 95. Although Microsoft has attempted to allay programmers' fears by defining APIs that are subsets of one another, few people are fooled.

HOPING FOR DOMINANCE

Windows programmers should be crossing their fingers in the hope that Windows 95 will soon dominate their users' market as much as Windows 3.1 does now. Such market dominance will give them a vital tool: the ability to focus on a single API, to learn it inside and out with little fear of their efforts going to waste.

Normally, porting an existing 16-bit program to a 32-bit architecture involves two fundamental issues—integers and memory addressing. Windows, however, adds other layers of

switches to Virtual 86 (V86) mode to execute old 16-bit DOS code. The 16-bitness may not be bad in itself, but switching from protected mode to V86 mode and back exacts a price in performance. Fortunately, the most important calls—those directly related to file I/O—are handled in protected mode. Windows 95 seems to reserve V86 mode for rather innocuous tasks, such as setting the current drive and getting and setting the current time, for example. But the code requesting those tasks ends up being reflected to a 16-bit handler that executes in V86 mode.

This fact has led some to charge that Windows 95 still requires DOS, and that

it's therefore not strictly an integrated OS. Whether it is or isn't ultimately boils down to an issue of semantics. Yes, Windows 95 makes some use of 16-bit code that used to be part of DOS. No, it doesn't require a separate product called MS-DOS in order to run. This latter fact is probably the more relevant one for end users who tend to think of DOS not as a code base but as something you buy in a box at a computer store.

A final instance in which 16-bit code comes into play is when Windows 95 communicates with a device for which a 32-bit driver is not available. For compatibility with existing hardware, Windows 95 can

still use 16-bit real-mode device drivers when necessary. This isn't a problem in and of itself, but 16-bit drivers impede performance and may reduce the amount of memory available to DOS apps. Windows 95 will therefore provide 32-bit versions of common 16-bit drivers such as MSCDEX and ASPI4DOS. In the future, most hardware devices for which Windows 95 does not provide direct driver support will come with 32-bit drivers written by their manufacturers.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

One problem that has pestered Windows users since day one is its limitations on free system resources. Windows 3.1 sets aside a fixed amount of memory in local heaps (64K segments of memory addressed with 16-bit pointers) belonging to USER and GDI. These hold data structures for windows, menus, GDI objects such as brushes and pens, and other resources that an application creates in the normal course of doing business. The percentage of free system resources displayed in Program Manager's About box is roughly equivalent to the percentage of memory in these heaps that is currently unallocated.

When the heaps fill up, Windows will complain about insufficient memory and refuse to start another program, even if there are megabytes of free memory remaining elsewhere in the system. To make matters worse, many programs fail to free some of the resources that they own prior to terminating, and Windows doesn't clean up behind them. The mere act of repeatedly starting and stopping one of these programs may drop free system resources to where Windows is unusable. The only recourse is to restart Windows.

This situation is greatly improved. Many of the data structures have been moved out of the 16-bit USER and GDI heaps and relocated in 32-bit heaps, whose size is virtually unlimited. So why weren't *all* data structures moved to 32-bit heaps? Compatibility. Some Windows 3.1 applications bypass the Windows API and access objects in the heaps directly. Moving everything to 32-bit heaps breaks these applications and renders them incompatible with Windows 95. The OS architects found themselves in the unenviable position of evaluating each object type and moving only those that weren't likely to

complexity to this process.

C, the language used most widely in Windows development, defines three different integer types: The *short* (usually 16 bits), the *long* (usually 32 bits), and the *int*, which can be 16 bits or 32 bits depending upon the underlying hardware and operating system. Skillful C programmers can use these three integer types to make their code easily portable from 16- to 32-bit environments.

The early developers of Windows, however, avoided the *int* almost entirely; instead, they defined new data types that were specifically 16 bits or 32 bits in length. This did not display much foresight. A more thoughtful definition of integer data types might have alerted programmers early on that Windows would one day be making the 32-bit plunge.

Some 16-to-32 bit changes (for example, graphical coordinates and handles that programs use to refer to objects such as windows) have even necessitated changes in function calls and messages that programs receive from Windows. In porting apps from Windows 3.1 to Windows 95, some changes will be mindlessly mechanical (or can even be automated), but pro-

grammers will also be meticulously searching for those 16-to-32 bit gotchas.

MEMORY MANAGEMENT

The other big issue is memory management. Rather than dealing with the insanity of 64K memory segments, programmers can now use a flat 32-bit address space. No programmer alive mourns this change, but those with applications that deal with huge chunks of memory will have to revise their entire memory management strategy.

Interestingly enough, the changes in the user interface of Windows 95 can be largely ignored, at least for fast ports of normal applications. It's always been one of the wonders of Windows that the visual interface is treated in an abstract

manner from the programmer's perspective. Still, application developers will want to keep up with current trends, such as toolbars, status lines, and the monster known as OLE. The good news is that Windows 95 is still Windows. Most of the programming skills and knowledge already learned over the past decade need not be unlearned—only supplemented. Windows is richer now, not poorer. □



Cross your
fingers for a
single API.

cause major compatibility problems.

In addition to providing expanded heap space, Windows 95 also cleans up after apps that fail to clean up after themselves. Resources are tracked on a per-thread basis; when a thread ends, any resources it failed to deallocate are automatically freed by the OS.

Here again Microsoft encountered compatibility problems with existing programs. Some Windows 3.1 applications intentionally leave resources behind for use by other programs or DLLs. Automatic

resource cleanup poses a problem for these applications.

The solution? Resources left behind by Win16 apps aren't freed until all Win16 apps are closed. You may still experience resource leakage if you run primarily Win16 apps, but because of the expanded heap space, the leakage won't be as severe. And lost resource space can be recovered by terminating all active Win16 processes. In addition, if you know that your favorite Win16 applications do not rely on the persistence of resources that they leave be-

hind, you can mark them as such and their resources will be cleaned up immediately.

One interesting quirk related to Windows 3.1's handling of memory has been partially carried over to Windows 95, at least in current beta versions. In Windows 3.1, information regarding active programs is stored in data structures known as task databases, or TDBs. Each TDB has embedded inside it a DOS program segment prefix (PSP) that must be located in memory below 1MB. (This region of memory is sometimes referred to as *glob-*

Joining the Multimedia Party

By Jeff Proisie

Up to now, Windows hasn't brought much to the multimedia party. It's never been the great graphics performer DOS is, because it denies programs direct access to the video buffer. And its sheer overhead makes achieving high-quality video and audio difficult. But that's rapidly changing. With Windows 95, multimedia developers should have a far better array of tools available.

FOR GAMES: WING AND WINTOON

The most popular tool for achieving superior graphics performance is the WinG (pronounced *win-gee*) library introduced last year. WinG allows programmers to reduce overhead by bypassing the Graphics Device Interface (GDI) and writing directly to a bitmap. Completed bitmaps are then transferred to the video buffer with optimized versions of Windows' BitBlt and StretchBlt functions. More important, WinG keeps graphics accelerators in the loop, so games that utilize WinG run astonishingly fast; so fast, in fact, that they sometimes outperform their DOS counterparts.

WinToon, another new multimedia graphics API, is a tool for making cartoon-like animations by creating foreground frames and overlaying them on a static background. The resulting .AVI files are optimized for speed, because only the portions of each frame that change are redrawn.

FOR 3-D: OPENGL OR REALITY LAB?

At the moment, it looks as if the first release of Windows 95 will not support OpenGL, the 3-D graphics language introduced in Windows NT 3.5. But OpenGL is expected soon thereafter, probably in the form of a freely distributable dynamic link library. OpenGL performs shading, texturing, hidden surface removal, and other rendering

news for users, but developers must now guess which (if either) API will become the standard.

Windows 95 will also introduce AutoPlay, a feature that allows a multimedia application on CD-ROM to be started automatically when the CD is inserted into a drive.

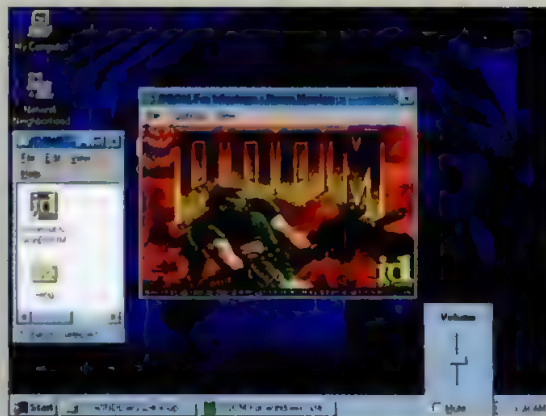
Compression also plays a big role in boosting multimedia performance,

particularly when it comes to full-motion video. Windows 95 will ship with 32-bit versions of the Indeo and Cinepak codecs. An MPEG driver apparently will not be included, but Microsoft is actively promoting the standard and has been demonstrating a software decoder from Mediamatics that plays flawless high-quality MPEG video on a 90-MHz Pentium with a PCI bus.

Other works in progress include TrueSpeech voice compression,

a general MIDI standard for Windows, a standard for digital joysticks, and a new multisession CD format that combines audio and data on one disk.

Only time will tell if Windows 95 can offer one of the biggest multimedia platforms around. But one thing's for certain: No matter what the outcome, it's going to be great fun getting there. □



Thanks to WinG's ability to bypass the GDI, classic games like id Software's DOOM can run as fast under Windows as they did under DOS.

operations in real time.

Microsoft recently acquired the London-based RenderMorphics, whose Reality Lab graphics library supports high-performance 3-D rendering in hardware and software. This gives Microsoft another new technology that is ideally suited for game and multimedia development. That's great

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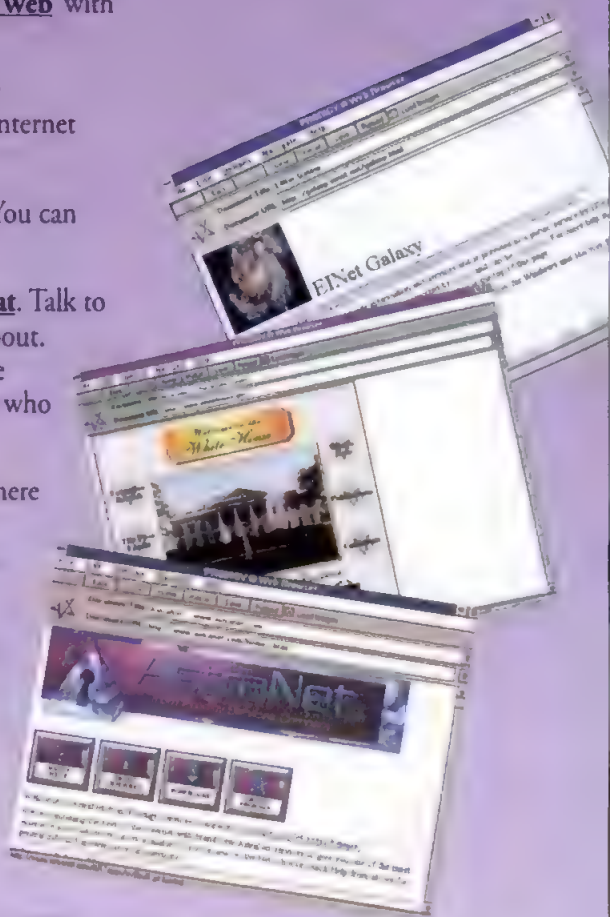
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al DOS memory, a name borrowed from the Windows API function used to allocate space there—GlobalDosAlloc.) If global DOS memory is so full that there's no more room for TDBs, Windows 3.1 will refuse to start additional programs even if free memory above 1MB and free system resources are plentiful.

TDBs and PSPs are still used in Windows 95. TDBs have been moved out of global DOS memory, but PSPs haven't. So it's still possible to encounter out-of-memory errors when there is no shortage of free memory. Fortunately, such situations should be rare. Windows 3.1 took steps to alleviate this problem (which was sometimes quite severe in 3.0) by transparently fulfilling most memory requests that formerly allocated global DOS memory with memory located above 1MB. Windows 95 improves the situation further by moving TDBs out of global memory, but it's still a hack rather than a genuine fix.

THE VFAT FILE SYSTEM

One of an OS's most important jobs is to manage data on hard and floppy disks. Typically this is done by generalizing the interface to the system's mass-storage devices and permitting applications to address files rather than individual sectors on the disk. When an application writes data to a file, the OS writes the data to the disk and creates a record of where it is stored. Knowing the filename, the application can later open the file and read the data back. The application neither knows nor cares how the data is physically stored; the details are handled by the OS.

Until Windows NT came along, Windows had no file system of its own. Instead, it relied on the DOS file system, which used a simple method of organizing files on a disk that centered around an on-disk data structure called the file allocation table (FAT). The FAT file system was adequate in the days of real-mode OSs and 10MB hard disks, but it has outlived its usefulness. Its greatest drawback is that it limits filenames to eight characters plus a three-letter extension. And when the file-system code resides in DOS, as it does today, Windows must kick out of protected mode every time it accesses a file. Clearly an OS that wishes to compete with the likes of Windows NT and OS/2, which support high-performance native file systems, must replace the FAT

file system with one of its own.

Windows 95 addresses these concerns with a new file system that is basically an extension of the FAT file system called virtual FAT (VFAT). VFAT is a 32-bit file-system driver that sits under the IFS manager in ring 0. The driver borrows heavily from the 32-bit file-access code in Windows for Workgroups 3.11 to provide a mostly protected-mode path to a disk and back. It also supports long filenames (up to 255 characters each) and maintains backward compatibility with FAT volumes.

Such a feat of magic is accomplished by recording two names—one long and one short—for each file, chaining 32-byte directory entries together to hold the long filenames and hiding these directory entries by marking them with an “impossible” combination of hidden, system, read-only, and volume label attribute bits. The short filename, or *alias*, is generated by truncating the long filename. DOS and Win16 apps see only the short filename; Win32 apps see the long version.

In some ways, it seems an ideal compromise. End users get the long filenames they've been waiting for, plus faster disk accesses and an easy upgrade path from FAT volumes. The long filenames work pretty well if you are careful not to modify a directory entry with a 16-bit app. If this happens, you can lose the long filename.

VFAT suffers, however, from many of the same limitations as the FAT file system. The size of the root directory is still fixed once the disk is formatted, so its capacity to hold file and subdirectory names is limited. The fixed size is even more constraining on a VFAT volume because every file (and subdirectory) requires at least two 32-byte directory entries—often more, depending on the length of the filename. The 16-bit limit on VFAT entries means that large hard disks require large cluster sizes (potentially reducing their storage efficiency) and that VFAT volumes are practically limited to about 2GB. Also, long filenames aren't visible until after the file-system driver is loaded, so long filenames can't be used during the

boot process (say, in a CONFIG.SYS or AUTOEXEC.BAT file).

How does VFAT compare to OS/2's HPFS and Windows NT's NTFS file systems? HPFS and NTFS are much more sophisticated file systems designed for high performance, large hard disk capacities (up to 2 terabytes for HPFS and a mind-boggling 68 billion terabytes for NTFS), greater storage efficiency, and greater reliability. NTFS is somewhat more sophisticated than HPFS. In

VFAT seems like an ideal compromise but suffers from many of the same limitations as the FAT file system.

particular, NTFS uses a transaction-based processing model that makes it possible to recover in a matter of minutes from just about any type of file-system error—even hard crashes resulting from power failures. Both HPFS and NTFS

are light years beyond VFAT.

On one hand, VFAT is compatible with existing disk volumes and disk repair utilities; this is a huge plus for the installed base of more than 50 million Windows users, most of whom could care less about the nuts and bolts of file-system operation. On the other hand, it is an outdated file system on crutches. It's too bad Windows 95 users won't be offered the choice of making a clean break with the past.

STABILITY

Almost every Windows user has experienced mysterious crashes that bring down an application and sometimes the entire system. Most of these crashes are due not to inherent flaws in the OS, but to buggy applications and device drivers. Video drivers are particularly notorious, as evidenced by the driver-of-the-week upgrades put out by many video board makers. These drivers are both a blessing and a curse: They enable Windows to work with a wide range of hardware, but they're so difficult to write that one can never be confident that all the bugs are gone.

One of the ways Windows 95 seeks to increase reliability is by decreasing the load on the independent hardware vendors (IHVs) who write the drivers. Borrowing a page from the design of printer drivers in Windows 3.1 and disk drivers in Windows NT, Microsoft has modified the disk- and

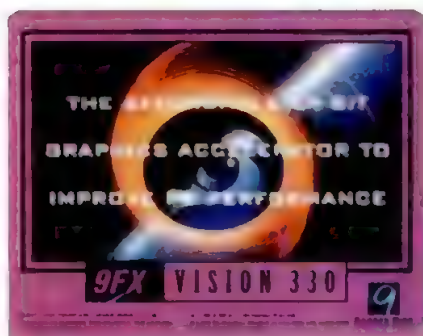
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CIRCLE 259 ON READER SERVICE CARD

display-driver model in Windows 95 so that a driver's core functionality is provided by a VxD written by Microsoft. Hardware-dependent functions supplied by the IHV are localized in a *minidriver* that works in tandem with the VxD. Windows calls the VxD, and the VxD, when necessary, calls the minidriver. This simplifies the code that the IHV writes and therefore reduces the likelihood of error.

Other improvements designed to heighten reliability include the private address spaces allocated to Win32 apps, better parameter validation when system services are called, and, for the first time, parameter validation for VxDs. Parameter validation is the simple act of verifying that parameters passed through function calls contain legal values that won't wreak havoc with the system. Users of DOS apps may now click a check box in a property sheet and acquire better protection of conventional memory, always a soft spot because some of the code and data stored there is global to all virtual machines.

How well does the protected memory

feature work? Not very well—at least not yet. Here's a simple experiment to try if you don't mind crashing your system. Open a DOS window and type DEBUG to start the DOS debugger. At the hyphen prompt, type

F 0000:0000 FFFF 66

This command overwrites the first 64K of memory with the arbitrarily chosen hexadecimal value 66. In Windows 3.1, this locks up the system, forcing a reset. Windows NT and OS/2 recover gracefully, allowing you to close down the DOS box. (In OS/2, make sure you're running DEBUG in a window; otherwise, you might not be able to switch back to the shell and close the DOS session.) In the beta 2 release of Windows 95, whose handling of low memory is much like Windows 3.1's, you also get a complete lockup—even if memory is marked "protected."

This could be fixed before Windows 95 is released, but for now it's evidence that Windows 95 is not the rock-solid performer some claim it to be. The burden still falls on applications developers to deliver safe and reliable products.

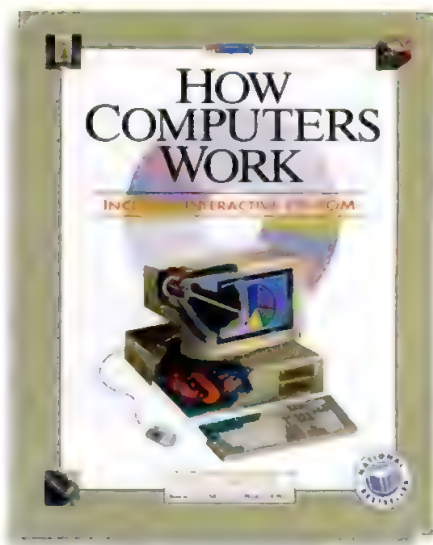
A LITTLE OLD, A LITTLE NEW

In general, Windows users will find Windows 95 to be a more robust and pleasing environment in which to run their favorite programs. The multitude of enhancements that sit on top of the base architecture—the redesigned user interface, better networking support, and easier configuration—will help to make it so. Microsoft has borrowed some of the best aspects of Windows 3.1 and built on that foundation to produce an OS whose exterior bears little resemblance to the Windows of years past but whose interior looks more than a little familiar.

Is Windows 95 a 32-bit OS? Not by the strictest of definitions, since it contains some residual 16-bit code. But it runs 32-bit applications and does everything else a 32-bit OS is supposed to do. In the final analysis, what will decide the success or failure of this OS is not the minutiae of its implementation, but how well it runs applications, how enthusiastically software developers support it, and how reliably it performs. Everything else is just noise. □

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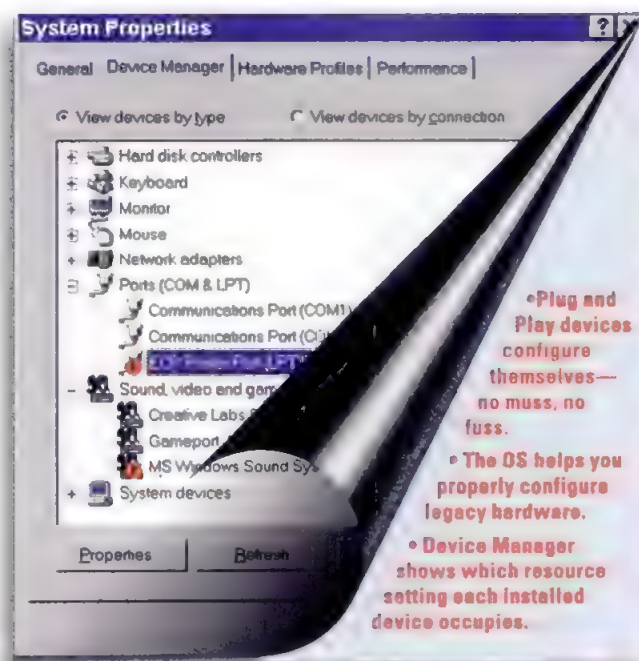
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CIRCLE 117 ON READER SERVICE CARD

PLUG AND PLAY

Plug and Play support integrated into Windows 95 promises to bring order to the chaos of adding new devices to your system. But if you're using legacy hardware, it's not exactly Shangri-La.



Effortless Upgrades

Microsoft is nothing if not ambitious. Among a multitude of enhancements, Windows 95 promises a solution to one of the thorniest problems facing PC users today: How to make installing peripherals in your PC as easy as adding components to a stereo system.

You've probably encountered the problem firsthand. A PC upgrade can turn into a game of "What's My Line" as you try to figure out which devices need which DMA channels, IRQ lines, I/O port assignments, and memory-address ranges; which of those limited resources are currently used by other devices; and how you can juggle them all to eliminate conflicts. Multimedia upgrade kits are among the most notorious offenders, but hardware and software manu-

facturers alike will attest that the problem permeates the PC industry.

Past attempts to regulate the PC architecture have generally proved ill-fated. EISA, originally promoted by Compaq and the so-called Gang of Nine, offered automatic configuration of EISA cards and compatibility with ISA products, but it never made significant inroads except in servers and Compaq desktop systems. IBM's technically impressive Micro Channel architecture, with its own automatic configuration features, is all but disappearing from the map. And although PCI and PCMCIA provide some automatic configuration capabilities, neither standard answers the truly critical compatibility question: how to support the thousands of existing legacy ISA expansion cards.

By John Clyman and Nick Stam

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INTRODUCING—PLUG AND PLAY

Windows 95 will include support for *Plug and Play* (PnP), a set of frameworks promoted by Microsoft, Compaq, Intel, and BIOS manufacturer Phoenix Technologies that aims to alleviate PC configuration problems. The standards, which were first proposed in January 1993, are intended to make device configuration entirely automatic and transparent—just plug in a new device and you're up and running.

PnP's ultimate goal: No more device conflicts; no more fiddling with jumpers, tweaking CONFIG.SYS files, or even loading device drivers. This benefits not only users but also vendors by dramatically reducing volume of costly technical support calls they must field. PnP also demands that device drivers support dynamic reconfiguration, forming a foundation for capabilities like PCMCIA hot swapping (which allows you to swap PCMCIA cards without rebooting your notebook), notebook hot docking (enabling the notebook to link with or unlink from devices in a docking station without rebooting), and wireless file exchange. PnP enjoys broad promises of support in the industry (although relatively few products are actually shipping today), and from a hardware perspective it's extremely inexpensive to implement.

While our testing of early Plug and Play products demonstrated their promise, it's also clear that PnP faces tremendous obstacles, particularly when it comes to handling legacy (that is, non-Plug and Play) ISA cards. Automatic identification of legacy cards is likely to remain spotty at best, and until the entire industry implements PnP capabilities, users will still require education about IRQs and DMAs and need to be comfortable setting DIP switches and jumpers.

TRUE PLUG AND PLAY

In theory, a complete PnP solution will automatically configure virtually every device inside your system: motherboard-mounted controllers, ISA cards, SCSI devices, displays, printers, and more. Such a solution requires a number of PnP components.

First, your system must have a PnP-ready BIOS, flexible enough to resolve any potential conflicts between the devices required to boot the operating system. PnP BIOSes from all three major BIOS ven-

■ PnP in Windows 3.1, NT, and OS/2

By M. David Stone

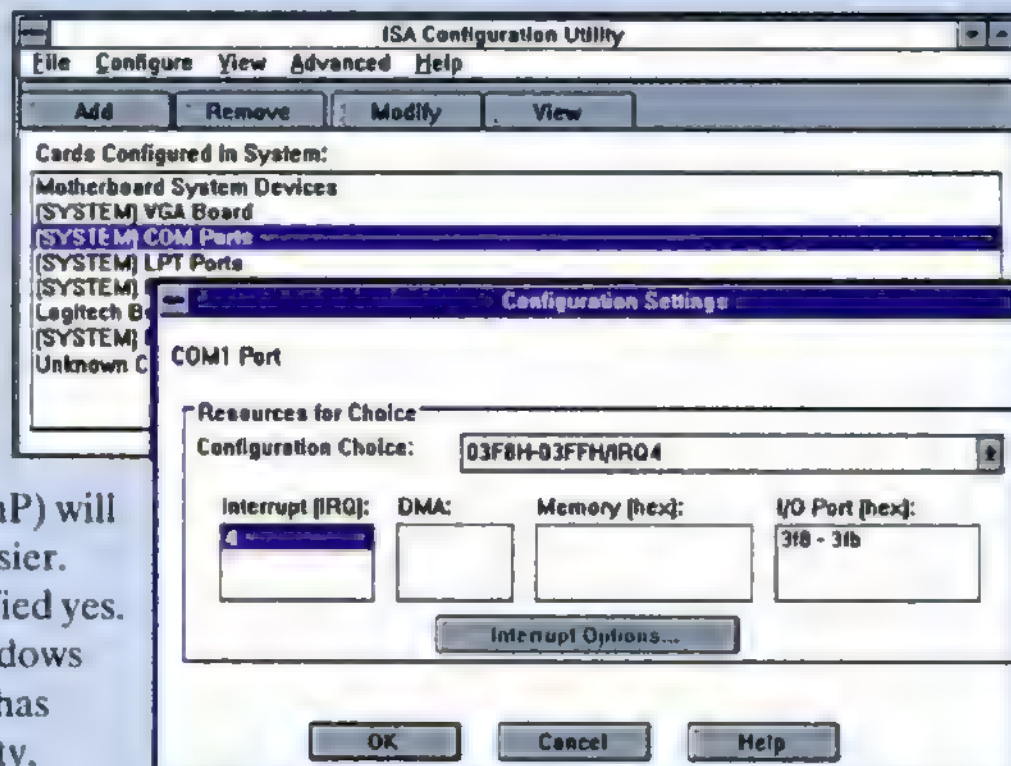
Installing Plug and Play peripherals promises to be a snap if you're running Windows 95, and installing legacy boards is likely to be easier than you're used to. But Windows ninetysomething isn't here yet. And you may not be in a rush to move to it anyway—particularly if your preferred operating system is OS/2, Windows NT, or straight DOS. The question, then, is whether the Plug and Play standard (PnP) will still make your life easier. The answer is a qualified yes.

For DOS and Windows 3.1 users, Intel Corp. has developed a PnP utility, called ICU (ISA configuration utility), that comes close to but doesn't quite match the PnP support in Windows 95. It doesn't automatically load drivers for PnP cards, nor does it recognize most non-PnP cards. But when you install a PnP card, it does work to resolve resource conflicts automatically. In addition, it helps you configure legacy devices and keeps a record of the resources being used by both PnP and legacy devices. It also supports PnP for PCMCIA.

ICU comes with both Windows 3.1 and DOS programs for managing

configuration information, and with Configuration Manager, which uses the stored information to configure PnP cards.

ICU will control resources for PCI cards as well. Intel expects ICU to treat



The ISA Configuration Utility dialog boxes assume that you understand IRQ, DMA, memory address, and I/O port settings.

dors (Phoenix, AMI, and Award) are already shipping in many systems, including those from Dell, Digital, Gateway, and Packard Bell. By mid-1995, we expect most systems to ship with PnP BIOSes.

You must also install a Plug and Play-capable operating system, whether it be Windows 95 or something else (see the sidebar "Plug and Play in Windows 3.1, NT, and OS/2" for a discussion of Plug and Play capabilities in other operating systems). The PnP-capable OS maintains structures that track the devices installed in the machine and their

existing VL-Bus cards in much the same way it treats legacy cards but hasn't yet tested it with VL-Bus cards. For our tests, Intel provided ICU, Version 1.21.

HOW IT WORKS

Whether your system has a PnP BIOS or not, the first step for using ICU is to install the ICU program for DOS, Windows, or both. In non-PnP systems, you then run a DOS program, CAS-SIST, that tries to determine the IRQs, use of resources.

Finally, all your expansion devices and device driver software must also support the Plug and Play standard: Peripherals vendors have to add logic to their devices to support PnP and to write device drivers to support dynamic reconfiguration. Dynamic reconfiguration even affects application developers, who might want a communications package to ask whether you'd like to send pending messages before letting you eject a PCMCIA fax/modem, for instance. Several PnP expansion cards have already begun to ap-

DMA, memory addresses, and I/O ports for each device installed in your system. CASSIST then writes the information to a file that goes in the root directory on your hard disk. Unfortunately, there are some devices that you can't easily find with software. So the next step is to run ICU, check what CASSIST found, and (based on what you know about your system) make the corrections and additions manually.

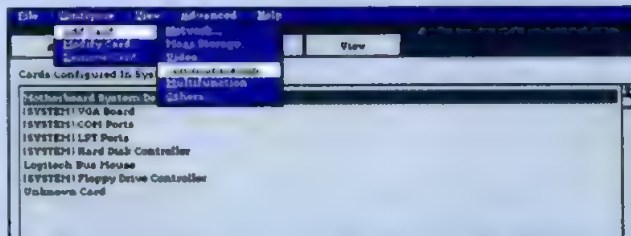
Changing legacy card settings in the ICU is straightforward, using reasonably self-explanatory dialog boxes in both DOS and Windows. The two programs have a similar design, with the DOS program offering a fair imitation of a Windows look and feel. Unfortunately, however, you not only have to know about IRQs, you have to know the current settings for the cards in your system.

If you have a PnP BIOS, you don't have to run CASSIST. The BIOS automatically finds PnP boards and system resources such as COM ports, and the system vendor should have set up the information for any legacy boards installed in the system before shipping.

Plug in a PnP card, such as the Future Domain PNP-1630 SCSI card that we used in our tests, and the Configuration Manager, like Windows 95, finds and configures the card on boot-up. In contrast to Windows 95, however, before you can use a CD-ROM drive on the card, you have to add an

MSCDEX device line in AUTO-EXEC.BAT, then install the Future Domain driver manually.

To install a legacy card, you run ICU, click on the Add button, and choose one of the categories (Network, Mass Storage, Video, and so forth) in Intel's database of 269 cards.



The DOS version of ICU sports a graphical interface that imitates Windows' look and feel.

If the card is in the database and its default settings are available, you choose it, and ICU will add the card to its list of installed cards. If the default settings are already being used by other devices but alternate settings are free, ICU will tell you to install the card with other specified settings. If none of the IRQ, DMA, or other resources your card supports are free, ICU will warn you of the conflict but will not tell you what to do. It's up to you to juggle settings on other cards to make room for the new one and then let the configuration know the new settings.

As should be obvious, the legacy card configuration process is far from idiot-proof—and a long way from PnP's promise of automatic installation. A more serious drawback to ICU is that it

won't let you share resources. That means you're barred from such common choices as installing your sound board and printer port to use the same IRQ, or installing four COM ports with COM1 and COM3 sharing one IRQ and COM2 and COM4 sharing the other. Intel says it may allow sharing in a future version.

OS/2 Warp, Version 3 users already have a built-in feature called Plug and Play for PCMCIA. As with ICU's PCMCIA Plug and Play, this works much like PCMCIA utilities for DOS but offers improved resource management for avoiding conflicts in desktop systems.

OS/2 also manages resources for adapter cards in a way that is similar but not identical to Intel/Microsoft's Plug and Play. Missing from OS/2 today is a database of ISA cards that helps you manually specify the right resources for legacy cards. Also missing is the ability to automatically configure PnP cards. Both features are promised for the indefinite future, with Jeff Howard, Worldwide OS/2 brand manager, saying only that when PnP peripherals are available in quantity, OS/2 will support them.

Windows NT 3.5, finally, does not support Plug and Play at all. Current plans are for the next version of NT, slated for a late 1996 release, to support the full range of Plug and Play features in much the same way that Windows 95 does. □

pear on the market (see the table "Plug and Play Product Roster").

In the immediate future, Plug and Play will provide the fullest solution for buyers of new machines with new PnP-compliant boards. But it turns out that you can reap partial benefits from PnP features even if you don't have all the pieces in place on your machine.

WHAT IT'S LIKE

Our experiences in testing ISA Plug and Play support under a beta version of Windows 95 in various scenarios were

generally positive. We did run into problems and conflicting messages at times, but most functions worked as specified. It was too early to make any conclusions about the problems we encountered since we were working with a prerelease package.

Here is a snapshot of what we found. Keep in mind that changes in the way configuration is handled are still possible.

Adding a PnP ISA device to a machine with a PnP BIOS. In this best-case scenario, the machine should be able to handle device configuration without any

user intervention at all. That's exactly what happened when we installed an NEC 501 quad-speed CD-ROM drive and a Future Domain PNP-1630 SCSI card in a Digital Equipment Corp. Celebris 590 PC with Phoenix Technologies' PnP BIOS. When we booted the system, it automatically detected the addition of the PnP SCSI card and enabled both the card and the CD-ROM drive. We didn't even have to load drivers from a floppy disk.

We also found that Windows 95 was able to identify and configure two other

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The Plug and Play-compliant products listed here are currently shipping or will ship in 1995.

Company	Product	Price	Shipping date
Ethernet Adapters			
Aecton Technology Corp.	EtherCombo-16 EN1660 ISA adapter	\$119.00	6/95*
	EtherPair-16 EN1661 ISA adapter	\$109.00	6/95*
	EtherCoax-16 EN1662 ISA adapter	\$109.00	6/95*
	EtherDuo-16 EN1666 ISA adapter	\$109.00	6/95*
Cabletron Systems	Cabletron E2210 Ethernet adapter	\$190.00	8/94
	Cabletron E2211 Ethernet adapter	\$400.00	12/94
	Cabletron E2212 Ethernet adapter	\$185.00	8/94
	Cabletron E2214 Ethernet adapter	\$425.00	12/94
	Cabletron E2219 Ethernet adapter	\$110.00	8/94
	Cabletron E221W	\$449.00	8/94
Intel Corp.	EtherExpress PRO/10	\$120.00	3/95
Standard Microsystems Corp.	EtherEz network interface card	\$119.00	9/94
	EtherEz network interface card (coax version)	\$124.00	9/94
	EtherEz network interface card (combo version)	\$129.00	9/94
3Com Corp.	EtherLink III 16-bit ISA (coax)	\$135.00	11/94
	EtherLink III 16-bit ISA TP	\$132.00	11/94
	EtherLink III 16-bit TPO	\$125.00	11/94
	EtherLink III 16-bit ISA Combo	\$150.00	11/94
	EtherLink III 32-bit EISA (coax or twisted-pair)	\$277.00	11/94
	EtherLink III 32-bit PCI TPO	\$169.00	11/94
	EtherLink III 32-bit PCI Combo	\$199.00	11/94
	EtherLink III 16/32-Bit Micro Channel (coax or twisted-pair)	\$277.00	11/94
Token-Ring Adapters			
Andrew Corp.	Bridgeport/7512 Token-Ring bridge	\$3,995.00	5/94
	Bridgeport/7806 Token-Ring bridge	\$4,395.00	1/95
IBM Personal Computer Co.	IBM Auto16/4 Token-Ring ISA Adapter	\$295.00	10/94
Intel Corp.	TokenExpress PRO	\$295.00	10/94
Thomas-Conrad Corp.	TC4145-C Plug and Play Token Ring adapter	\$299.00	9/94
SCSI Adapters			
Adaptec Inc.	Adaptec 1530P ISA SCSI adapter	\$199.00	7/94
	Adaptec 1540CP ISA SCSI adapter	\$249.00	6/95*
	Adaptec 1542CP ISA SCSI adapter	\$269.00	6/95*
Future Domain Corp. QLogic Corp.	Plug and Play Valuepak (includes PNP-1630 adapter)	\$149.00	12/94
	Fast/SCSI PCMCIA-10	\$214.95	10/94
	Fast/SCSI IQ PCI (Fast/Wide SCSI-3)	\$359.95	2/94
	Fast/SCSI IQ PCI-10	\$249.95	11/94
	Fast/SCSI PCI Basic	\$249.95	11/94
	Fast/SCSI PnP FL	\$149.95	5/95*
	Fast/SCSI PnP Basic	\$79.95	5/95*
Multimedia Peripherals			
ATI Technologies Inc.	Graphics Xpression	\$249.00	7/94
	Graphics Pro Turbo (1600 version)	\$899.00	3/95
Aztech Labs Inc.	Explorer external multimedia system	\$299.00 to \$389.00	8/94
Crystal Computer Corp.	Crystalizer Plug and Play MultiCD Sound Card	\$249.95	2/95
	Crystalizer Plug and Play SCSI-2 Sound Card	\$279.95	2/95
Tecmar Inc.	PC/TV external video-audio adapter	\$455.00	1/94
Monitors			
NEC Technologies Inc.	NEC MultiSync XV14	\$330.00	3/95
	NEC MultiSync XV15	\$460.00	1/95
	NEC MultiSync XV17	\$799.00	3/95
	NEC MultiSync XE15	\$575.00	10/94
	NEC MultiSync XE17	\$1,060.00	10/94
	NEC MultiSync XE21	\$2,095.00	10/94
	NEC MultiSync XP15	\$695.00	11/94
	NEC MultiSync XP17	\$1,295.00	12/94
	NEC MultiSync XP21	\$2,580.00	12/94
Portable Products			
IBM Personal Computer Co.	IBM ThinkPad Dock II	\$719.00	6/94

* Predicted.

early PnP ISA cards that we tested: an Aztech Labs Explorer sound card and an Intel TokenExpress PRO network interface card. Because we did not have Windows 95 drivers for these cards at the time of this writing, we weren't actually able to use them from within Windows 95 except in a Windows 3.1 compatibility mode. Windows 95 will include device drivers for a variety of PnP ISA cards (just as printer drivers for popular printers are included in Windows 3.1), but you may still need to install drivers manually for some products.

Adding legacy ISA cards to a machine with a PnP BIOS. Upon bootup, Windows 95 was unable to detect automatically that legacy ISA devices had been added to the system. As a result, when we added legacy cards to the PnP-enabled Celebris 590 system, we had to initiate the configuration process ourselves by invoking the Add New Hardware wizard provided (with its own icon) in Windows 95. This wizard—similar in concept to the wizards in Microsoft applications such as Excel—walks you through the legacy card installation process and works with you to identify legacy ISA boards that cannot automatically identify themselves to the system (see the sidebar "Setting Up Your Hand-Me-Downs").

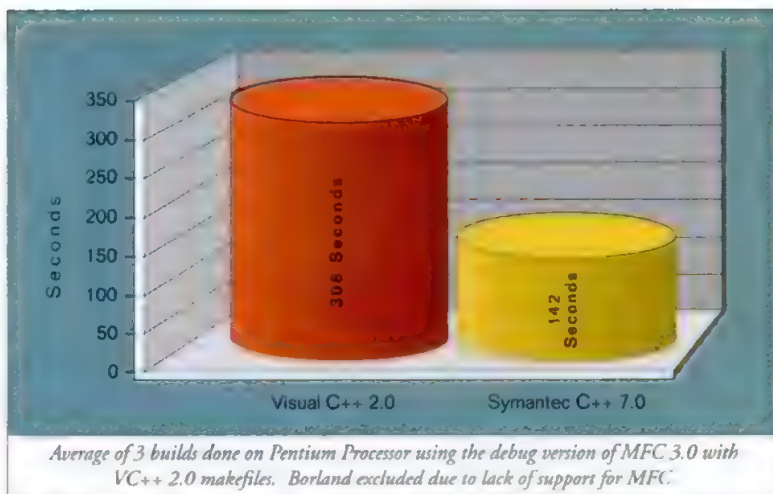
The Add New Hardware wizard can automatically identify many legacy ISA products by looking for identifying snippets of code or similar markers in the board's ROM or by interrogating I/O addresses for board-specific information. Determining what ISA cards are present is an arcane art at best, though, and Windows 95 was unable to recognize the specific boards we tried: an Aztech Sound Galaxy 16, a Creative Labs Video Blaster, an Intel TokenExpress ISA 16/4, a 3Com EtherLink 16, and a Trantor T160 SCSI. As a result, we had to bypass the auto-detection process and manually select the name of the adapter we installed from a list of close to 2,000 products. (All but one of the cards we tested—the Video Blaster—were in the provided database.)

Windows 95 knows the default settings for products in this database and will instruct you to reset the adapter's resource usage manually (DMA channel,

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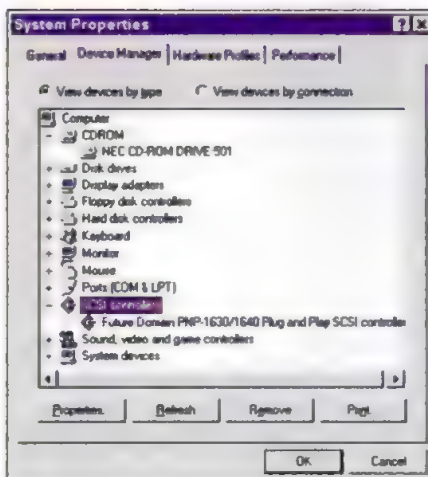
CIRCLE 186 ON READER SERVICE CARD

IRQ lines, and so forth) if the defaults would cause a conflict. Usually this means setting jumpers or DIP switches based on instructions in the board's documentation. In other words, Windows 95 does not provide explicit instructions on how to set the board properly; it just informs you what resources will work best and relies on you to figure out how to configure your hardware. This could obviously be a problem for the novice user. Hope that you haven't misplaced your instruction manuals.

Installing Windows 95 in a PC with a PnP BIOS. When we installed Windows 95 into an existing PC with legacy devices for the first time, it didn't make any overt attempt to identify the hardware inside. What this means is that sooner or later you'll need to tediously catalog all of the existing components in your system and the IRQs, DMAs, and memory addresses that they use—as we did—so that the operating system will know what resources are available for a new peripheral. But then, that's really no worse than what you typically need to do to install new hardware today, and once you're done, you should never have to repeat the process. If you don't take the time to tell Windows 95 about the installed hardware, adding PnP cards could easily cause a conflict: The operating system could assign resources to the PnP card that are not available simply because it doesn't know that they're in use.

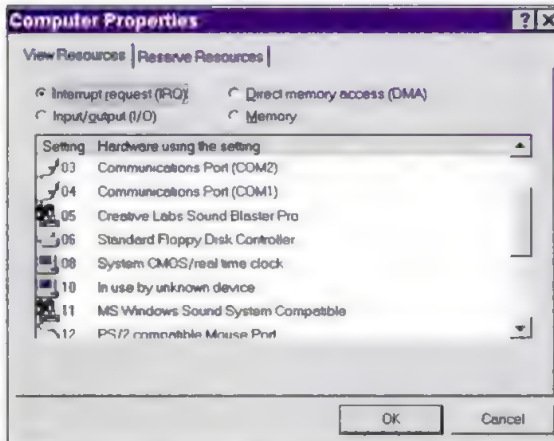
Adding PnP ISA cards to a machine without a PnP BIOS. Microsoft has taken great pains to ensure that Windows 95 can properly configure PnP cards even in machines that lack a PnP BIOS. This approach will be inherently less reliable than that in machines that do have a PnP BIOS because it means that Windows 95 has to try to identify various motherboard devices itself since the BIOS can't do it automatically. Still, we were able to make Windows' PnP work most of the time.

Using a Compaq Deskpro/M, which does not have a PnP BIOS, we installed the same PnP ISA boards as in the PnP-enabled Digital system. As before, configuration required no user intervention. For products with device drivers not included in Windows 95, you might need to install device drivers at this point.



Installing PnP devices couldn't have been easier. New devices automatically appeared on the Hardware Tree.

Adding legacy ISA cards to a machine without a PnP BIOS. Installing Windows 95 onto an existing, non-PnP-ready PC and configuring legacy ISA cards will entail many of the same difficulties that exist today. The Add New Hardware wizard in Windows 95 may alleviate some difficulties; it will at least do its best to suggest



Windows 95 lets you instantly see the IRQs, DMAs, I/O, and memory addresses of your installed devices.

settings for the card that won't conflict with other legacy devices that are already installed and known to Windows 95.

BEYOND ISA

The PCI and PCMCIA buses were designed with Plug and Play-like capabilities in mind, so even existing cards should support automatic configuration and work within the Windows 95 PnP framework with the help of Windows 95

bus enumerators for PCI and PCMCIA devices. (An enumerator is a special software program that identifies devices attached to a bus.) Windows 95 then loads the appropriate device drivers. We tested this capability using an ATI Graphics Pro Turbo (1600 version) PCI graphics adapter in the Digital Celebris 590 and it worked, to a degree: The machine booted, albeit into a VGA-compatible mode, since we didn't have the Windows 95 device drivers to support higher resolutions and work with the board's special features.

When we tried a Proteon p1990 EISA network interface card in the Compaq Deskpro/M to test EISA's integration into the Plug and Play framework, configuration was slightly more complex but still manageable. We first had to identify the board using the ECU (EISA Configuration Utility, the tool EISA systems have always used to perform expansion card configuration). Then, when we reentered Windows 95, the built-in EISA enumerator was able to detect the updated information from the CMOS nonvolatile storage area and configure devices appropriately.

Microsoft says EISA support was still spotty in the beta version of Windows 95 that we tested, and that improved enumerators will ultimately mean that you won't need to use the ECU at all. Similar support is planned for Micro Channel devices, although it is uncertain whether the IBM-developed enumerator required for transparent Micro Channel configuration will be available when Windows 95 originally ships.

The VL-Bus 2.0 standard supports Plug and Play auto-configuration, but in practice, this will be implemented rarely. By the time the VL-Bus 2.0 spec was ratified, PCI had become entrenched as the high-speed bus of choice. As a result, most VL-Bus cards comply with only the Version 1.0 specification and therefore operate like legacy ISA cards.

Plug and Play SCSI support is built into Windows 95 as well. If you're in the market to buy SCSI peripherals, look for

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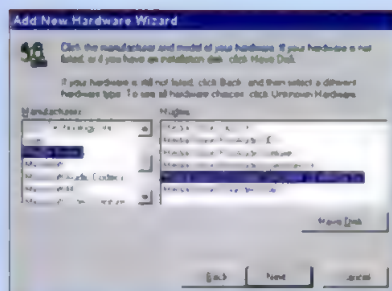
Setting Up Your Hand-Me Downs

In an ideal world, you would buy a Windows 95-equipped Plug and Play system as well as all new hardware and never worry about configuration problems again. But most of us won't be throwing out our old sound cards, CD-ROM drives, and NICs to buy PnP-ready devices if we upgrade to Windows 95.

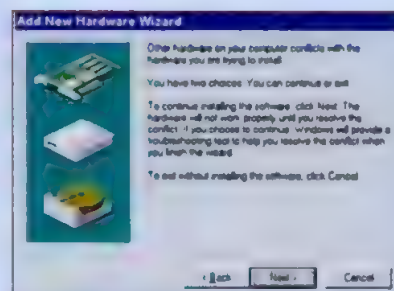
The process you go through to install a legacy device will vary depending on whether or not the OS is able to recognize the device automatically and whether there are resource conflicts. In this scenario we installed a Media Vision Pro Audio Spectrum 16 sound card (with a SCSI connector) that was not detected automatically and did conflict with another device.



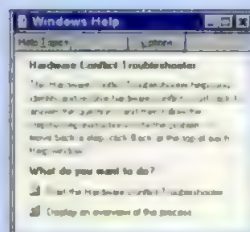
3 The wizard downloads the Media Vision device drivers from the OS's database and then gives us the option of running the Conflict Troubleshooter.



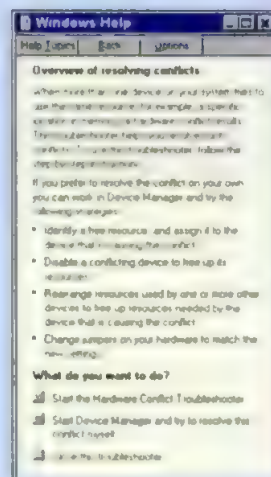
1 Initially, we launched the Add New Hardware Wizard and asked it to detect the ISA sound card we had installed. Unable to find it, the wizard prompts us to choose the Install Specific Hardware option. In this screen we have selected our card from handy pick lists (almost 2,000 cards are listed in the database).



2 Knowing the default settings for the Media Vision card from its database entry and aware of the settings of other cards in our system, the wizard alerts us to an unspecified conflict. We choose to continue.



4 A series of dialog boxes, such as this one and the next, hold our hand through the troubleshooting process.



5 The overview nicely explains the options you have at this point, including instructions should you decide to tackle the conflict resolution on your own. We start the Conflict Troubleshooter.

devices that comply with a specification called SCAM, which stands for SCSI Configuration Automatically. SCAM not only allows SCSI devices to be recognized by a PnP operating system, it provides automatic termination of the SCSI bus and remapping of SCSI device IDs, which should eliminate many of the traditional difficulties associated with SCSI configuration.

A draft standard for PnP monitors extends the VESA DDC (Display Data Channel) standard; this lets monitors com-

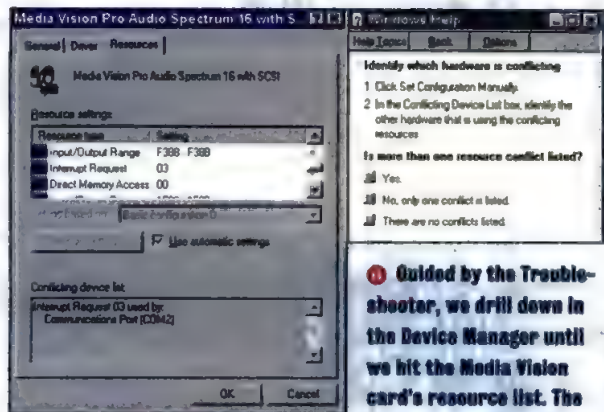
municate the resolutions and refresh rates they support to graphics cards, the OS, graphics drivers, and configuration utilities. These can then take actions such as blocking out unsupported modes or automatically setting themselves to exploit the monitor's highest refresh rate at a particular resolution. DDC-compliant monitors are just beginning to appear, but we expect the feature to become standard in monitors introduced in the second half of 1995.

Additional specs cover PnP parallel and serial port devices as well. Here, the

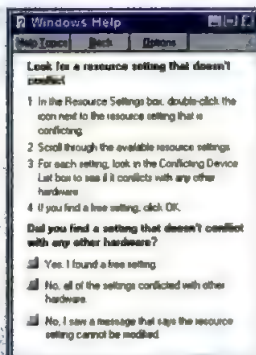
underlying idea is to enable the PC to automatically identify connected devices and install the appropriate device drivers. In theory, this would make connecting a printer or modem a simple matter of plugging the cable into the back of the machine: You wouldn't have to know what model it is or what capabilities it offers.

UNDER THE HOOD

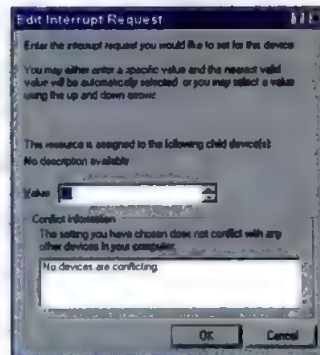
How do the BIOS, operating system, and hardware devices interact to work their autoconfiguration magic? In a fully PnP-



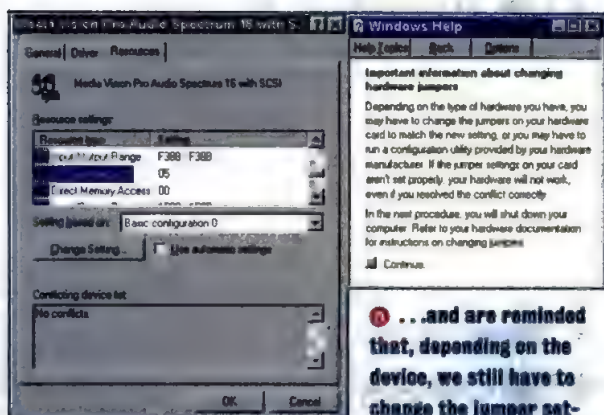
1 Guided by the Troubleshooter, we drill down in the Device Manager until we hit the Media Vision card's resource list. The OS is able to tell us that the conflict is with IRQ 03, which is taken by the device on COM2.



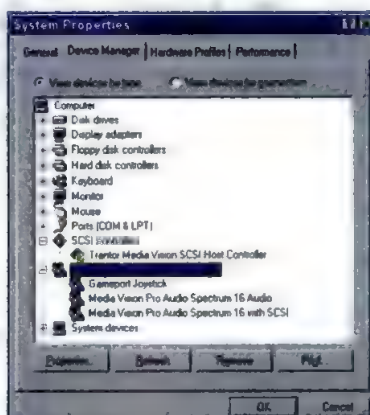
2 The Troubleshooter then sends us to the Resource Settings box to find an open IRQ.



3 We change the setting in Windows 95 software to IRQ 05...



4 ...and are reminded that, depending on the device, we still have to change the jumper settings physically on the card itself. I hope we kept the manual.



5 After restarting our computer, we check the Device Manager to see our new card. The Media Vision card is now included—but what's that yellow flag on our SCSI controller? The Trantor SCSI controller on the sound board conflicts with another device in our system. Here we go again....

enabled machine, the PnP BIOS enables all PnP cards, then puts them to sleep, waking each one individually to assign a unique card-select number (CSN). The BIOS then queries each PnP device by its CSN and compiles a list of PnP cards and their required resources.

Some BIOSes then disable all PnP devices except those needed to boot the system (keyboard, hard disk, graphics adapter); others configure and enable all PnP cards at this time. There are advantages and disadvantages to both scenarios.

Enabling all the PnP cards up front is the only way to make them work if the operating system does not contain PnP support; keeping some PnP cards dormant until the OS loads reduces the likelihood of a conflict with a legacy device (which the PnP OS might know about even if the BIOS doesn't). Intel is encouraging BIOS manufacturers to support both approaches through a user-accessible CMOS setting.

If the BIOS is set to enable only boot devices, it will try to set them up in a way

that avoids conflicts and allows the operating system to enable remaining PnP devices. Even this process could fail if a misconfigured legacy card is installed in the system, however. When it loads, the operating system must also invoke device drivers for all the devices in the system.

The operating system's PnP functionality is coordinated by the Configuration Manager (CM). The CM controls the operating system components that actually interact with the hardware, including enumerators for each expansion bus in

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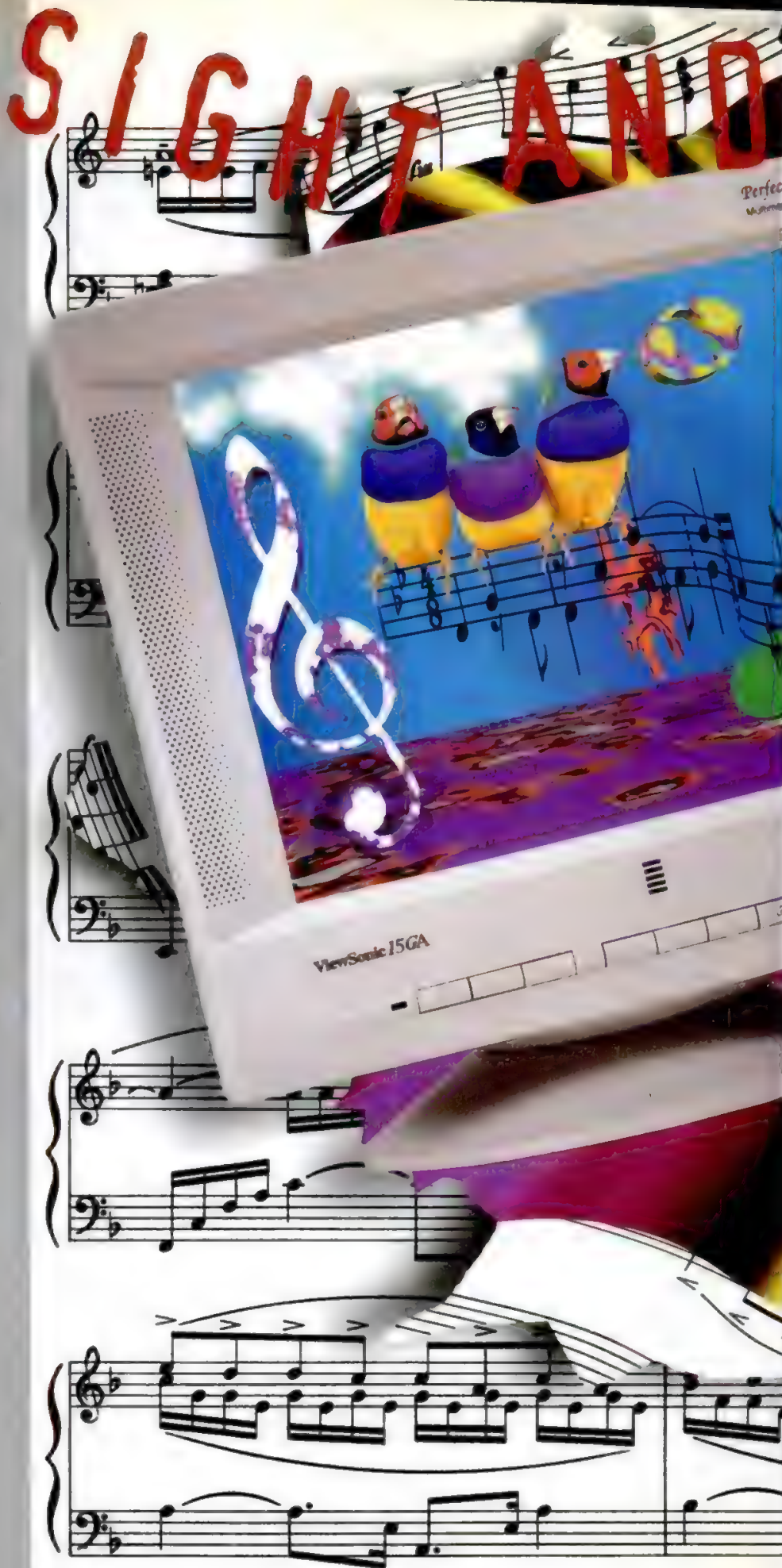
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SOUND EXPLOSION



decresc.

decresc.

the system. Information that the CM and supporting software gather about devices in the system is collected in a structure called the Hardware Tree. A visual representation of the Hardware Tree is available on the Device Manager dialog page, accessed through the System icon on the Windows 95 Control Panel. By clicking on individual devices in the tree, you can see their resource allocations and driver information.

CERTIFICATION

With an ambitious set of standards like those proposed for PnP, there's a risk that different vendors will interpret them in subtly different ways that lead to incompatibilities. Even barring this possibility, it will be many months, if not years, before systems are entirely PnP-enabled. The potential for confusion in the interim is enormous.

Microsoft plans to make buyers' decisions easier by undertaking an aggressive compatibility certification program. Machines that pass the tests will be eligible for a Windows 95 logo.

For systems, the logo means that the machine includes a PnP BIOS, plus additional system-specific PnP support. For instance, notebooks with docking station options need to support hot docking. And Microsoft also recommends (but doesn't require) that desktops include PnP-compatible devices—from IDE hard disks to ISA cards. The Windows 95 logo will also indicate that the machine's components meet Microsoft's minimum "PC 95" hardware specifications for running Windows 95: a 386-based or better CPU, 4MB RAM, a 640-by-480 display supporting 256 colors via a flat-frame buffer, a dedicated mouse port or integrated pointing device, one serial port, and one parallel port.

LOOKING AHEAD

One of the most exciting aspects of Plug and Play is its support for dynamic reconfiguration events, which helps lay a foundation for "anywhere, anytime" computing. PCMCIA hot swapping is

nothing new, but the Plug and Play frameworks hint at a far more robust communication model that would actually let applications make intelligent responses to configuration events. Your word processor might ask whether you want to save your file before ejecting a notebook from a docking station with a hard disk. Or, as you walk into your office, your notebook could transparently connect to the network and begin downloading your e-mail. Also covered under the dynamic reconfiguration umbrella: Basic notebook hot-docking capabilities, such as informing the PC about the avail-

ble ISA cards begin shipping.

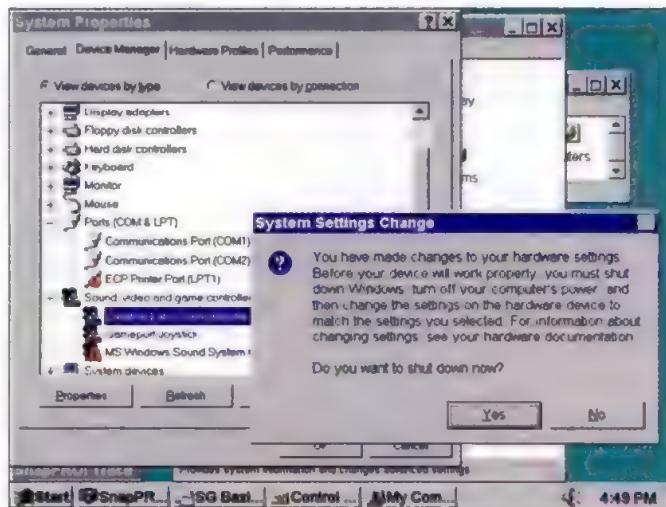
For owners of older machines, PnP may reduce configuration hassles, although legacy card configuration problems will persist. And there are a few other limitations that PnP simply cannot eliminate. For instance, it's possible that two legacy ISA cards will support such a limited selection of resources that they simply cannot be used in the same machine without conflicts. (To avoid this difficulty with new products, Microsoft strongly recommends that PnP devices be built to support eight IRQ lines, three DMA channels, eight base I/O address locations, and eight base memory address locations.)

PnP also doesn't remove a fundamental barrier built into the PC architecture, namely the finite number of IRQs (15) and DMA channels (7) that exist. Many of these are allocated for hardwired system devices such as timers and various controllers; in fact, a point of contention among PnP's backers is how to handle some interrupts that are often assigned to devices, such as printer ports, that don't actively use the IRQs. That means that if you add enough cards, sooner or later you'll still run out of options.

Some misbehaved applications that write directly to hardware may also prove incompatible with PnP's potential to remap key resources. With PnP OSes and PnP devices still in preproduction stages, it's too early to tell whether this will be a significant problem or not. The most likely culprits are games, which are notorious for breaking every hardware-interface convention in the interest of performance.

These limitations are insignificant given PnP's promise. While reaching its utopian goals will take time—probably a matter of years rather than months—Microsoft and its collaborators are laying the foundation for a fundamental improvement in the usability of the PC.

You can find more PnP information, including standards documents, in the *Plug and Play Forum on CompuServe (GO PLUGPLAY)*. □



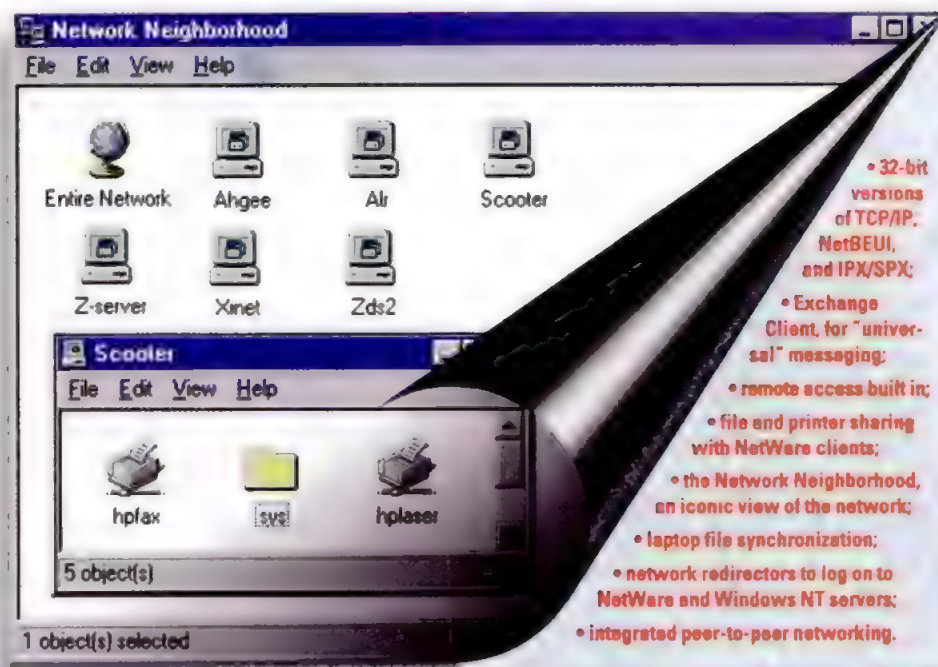
The screen message above shows that with legacy cards, you still have to do some things the old-fashioned way.

ability of additional serial and parallel ports, mass-storage devices, and a higher-resolution display.

Dynamic reconfiguration events will require support not just in the OS but also in applications. Windows 95 and the PnP frameworks define a strategy for providing these capabilities, but it will be at least a year before software really implements them effectively.

THE PROGNOSIS

Our initial impressions of Plug and Play are relatively favorable. Although the standards are bound to experience growing pains, Microsoft's PC 95 certification program should help steer vendors in the right direction. And even if some of the proposed aspects of the PnP frameworks don't fall into place immediately, many of Plug and Play's benefits will be tangible as soon as PnP-compati-



COMMUNICATING WITH WINDOWS 95

Hooked and Linked

The best network client, strong remote access, and a capable peer-to-peer LAN, Windows 95 makes communicating a breeze.

By Steve Rigney

IN THIS SECTION

Built to Connect	176
Laptop Links	178
Dawn of the Universal Client?	188

What does Microsoft Windows 95 mean to network users and administrators? In a nutshell: a customizable, universal network client. You'll have to do some work up front, but after installation you can bend and shape Windows 95 to fit into any network configuration.

We spent weeks comparing the network features of Windows 95 and OS/2 Warp, Windows 3.1, Windows for Workgroups 3.11, and Windows NT Workstation. We connected clients running these operating systems to servers running NetWare 3.12 and 4.1, IBM OS/2 LAN Server Advanced 4.0, and Windows NT Server 3.5.

We found that in terms of flexibility and functionality, Windows 95 is the best network client for all these network operating systems. All features are easy for administrators to install and manage. The networking benefits of Windows 95 include:

- The best NetWare integration in its class.

- The utilities you need to connect to almost any other existing network.
- Good peer-to-peer networking that allows you to set up a small workgroup LAN by adding network cards and cabling.
- Multiple dial-in options. There's client software for Windows NT's Remote Access Server, Windows 95's own limited dial-in server, Novell's NetWare Connect, and Shiva's LanRover or NetModem.
- Easy-to-use laptop synchronization by parallel or serial cable. Also, laptops hooked to a desktop have access to all the same drives, printers, and other resources as the desktop PC (see the sidebar "Laptop Links").

Windows 95 has even more features than its big brother, Windows NT, and far more than its predecessor, Windows for Workgroups. In comparison, the current version of IBM's OS/2 Warp lacks robust networking functionality (other than stellar Internet access), although that should change with the imminent arrival of the next version, Warp Connect, which is expected to offer peer-to-peer functionality, remote access, and a range of protocols. (See "OS/2 Warp and Beyond" in the main introduction to this cover story.)

We also found that the four clients differed in their included networked applications. Where Windows for Workgroups and Windows NT both have Microsoft Mail and Schedule Plus, Windows 95 provides a new set of programs collectively known as Microsoft Exchange. With Exchange you finally have a single mailbox that offers mail, fax, and data, as well as connections with some third-party services. The current beta version of Windows 95 ships with drivers for Microsoft Mail, CompuServe mail (but not CompuServe forums), Internet mail, and Microsoft Network, but not MCI Mail. Exchange will work with existing Windows for Workgroups and Windows NT post offices (see the sidebar "Dawn of the Universal Client?"). In comparison, OS/2 Warp includes the Internet Access Kit, Web Browser, and Internet Mail, and Warp Connect will add Lotus Notes Express and other drivers.

WHAT YOU'LL SEE

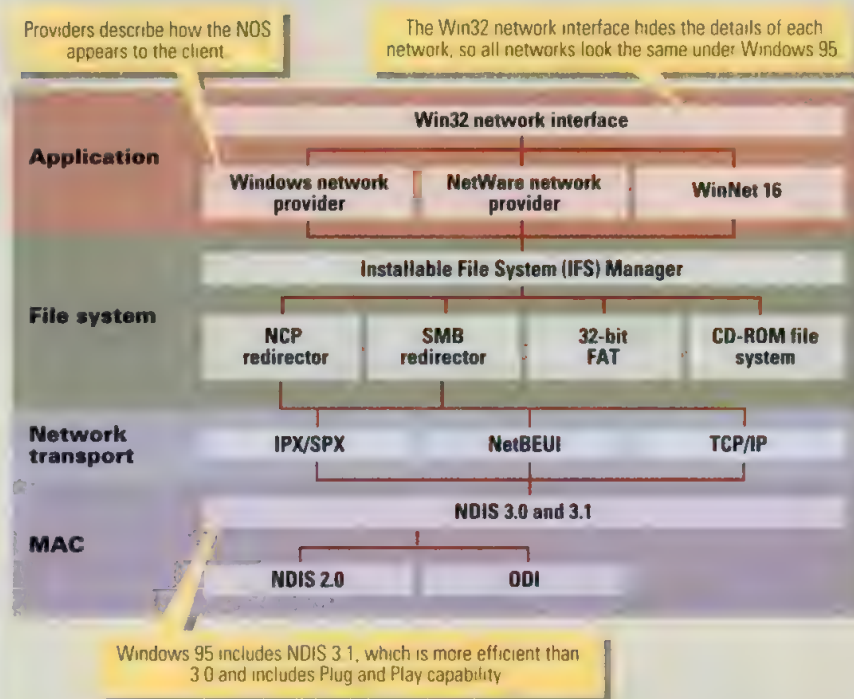
In-the-office users can take advantage of the built-in networking and communications functionality with four utilities: Net-

BUILT TO CONNECT *The networking facilities in these*

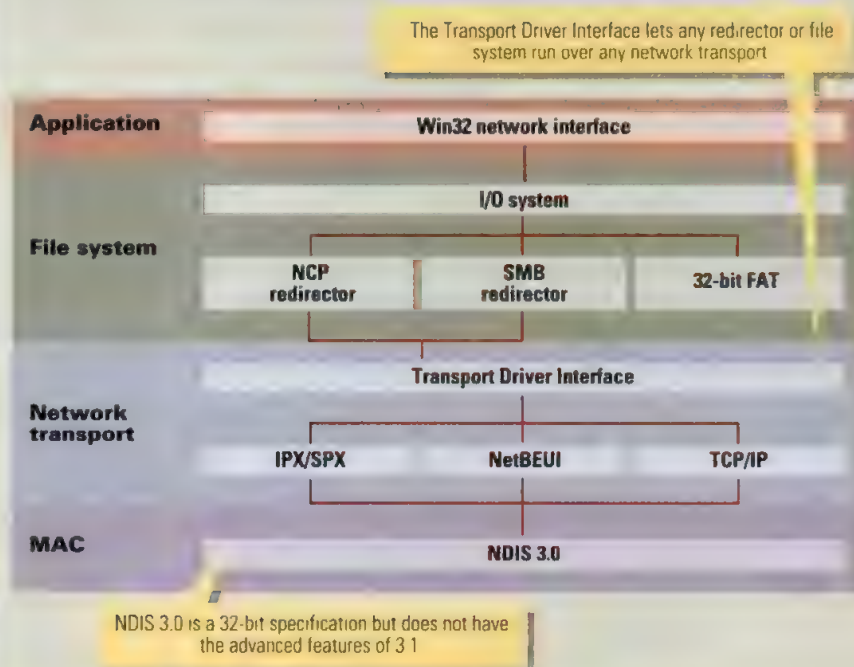
The **application** level comprises the operating system's client-side programming interfaces

Components in the **file system** level handle the file operations (opening, deleting, writing) initiated by the application.

WINDOWS 95



WINDOWS NT WORKSTATION 3.5



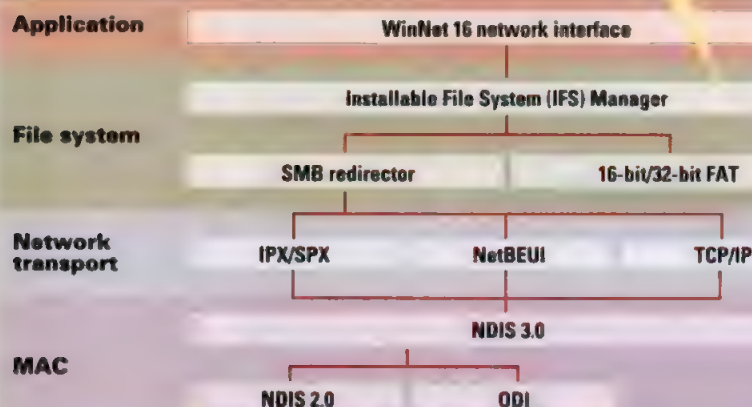
operating systems fall into four categories.

The **network transport** level consists of protocols that carry these operations across the network.

The software in the **MAC (Media Access Control)** level determines whether these operations can be sent across the network.

WINDOWS FOR WORKGROUPS 3.11

As in Windows 95, IFS Manager lets any application in theory run over any file system

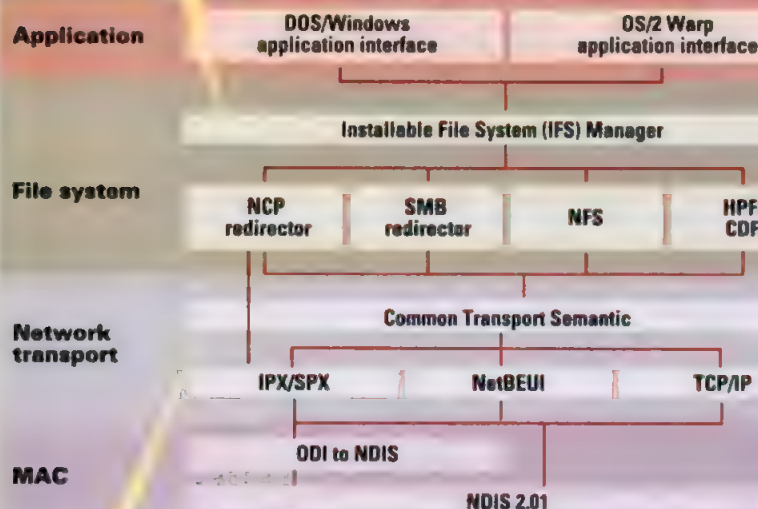


NDIS 2.0 is a 16-bit specification that does not include Plug and Play features

ODI (Open Data-link Interface) is Novell's driver specification

OS/2 WARP CONNECT

IFS Manager lets any application in theory run over any file system



Like Microsoft's ODI, Common transport Semantic lets you run any file system over any protocol

NDIS lets multiple protocols share one adapter and lets multiple adapters share one protocol

work Neighborhood, Windows Explorer, Control Panel, and Briefcase.

Network Neighborhood makes connecting to and disconnecting from network resources far easier than in Windows for Workgroups or Windows NT. But it's not as intuitive as with other peer-to-peer LANs such as LANtastic or PowerLAN. Warp Connect promises this functionality.

Network Neighborhood presents a list of available servers. You can select, map a drive, or attach to the server. If you have logged onto the server, you can also browse resources such as file and queue names. While you can open a file or run an application, you cannot perform other file operations such as copy, delete, move, or rename. For that you'll need Windows Explorer, Microsoft's juiced-up version of File Manager. As with Program Manager and File Manager in the current Windows, the relationship between Network Neighborhood and Explorer is muddled, and for many jobs you'll need both of them.

You configure the client through the Control Panel, as you do currently. But Microsoft has greatly expanded Control Panel's functionality. You can define the PC as a server or client and set the user name and password, security information, network type, and kinds of network protocols used.

For road warriors, there's Briefcase. It allows you to copy files from the network or desktop to a portable or floppy disk and have Windows 95 handle the file copying, disk compression, and disk management of moving files. But for PC-to-portable transfers, you'll have to provide your own parallel or serial cable.

Also, when desktop and laptop are linked, you can take advantage of all the functionality of your desktop PC: You can print to a local or network printer, access a CD-ROM drive, or use the local PC or file server as a backup device. Windows 95 even lets you set up your desktop PC as

Our Contributors: STEVE RIGNEY is a networking consultant and a contributing editor to *PC Magazine*. TONY POMPILI is a networking and workgroup consultant and a frequent contributor to *PC Magazine*. DAVID GREENFIELD was the senior editor in charge of this story.

a dial-up server, so you can access it (with the appropriate passwords) from afar with your portable.

HOW IT NETWORKS

As you dig deeper into Windows 95, you find a tremendous software infrastructure. There are network drivers for linking your PC to the LAN, network protocols for speaking the right language once you're connected, and network redirectors that let you log into NetWare and Windows NT

servers. All these components use 32-bit code, which means they are very fast.

Windows 95 follows the Microsoft networking structure established in Windows NT and Windows for Workgroups. In the default configuration, the Server Message Block formulates and answers requests for services while NetBEUI packets carry the requests across the LAN. But Windows 95, like Windows NT, can alternatively use Microsoft's version of Novell's Internetwork Packet Exchange (IPX) to

carry the LAN traffic. The package also includes TCP/IP LAN protocols and utilities that are particularly useful for Internet connections.

The 32-bit protected-mode versions of TCP/IP, NetBEUI, and IPX/SPX bundled in Windows 95 are faster and use less memory than Windows for Workgroups' 16-bit drivers. Best of all, because the drivers run in protected mode, the client software won't freeze if the node is disconnected from the LAN, as it

■ Laptop Links

By Steve Rigney

When Microsoft's engineers designed the networking features of Windows 95, they didn't forget the mobile PC users of the world. With remote access and Plug and Play, Windows 95 lets you easily connect to a Windows NT or NetWare network whether you're in the office or away.

Windows 95's remote-access services are probably its most exciting features for mobile PC users. With a laptop and modem, you can reach back to your LAN by calling directly into a Windows 95 machine or by using a remote-node server to connect as a node on the LAN. Windows 95 includes drivers for Windows NT's Remote Access Server (RAS), Novell's NetWare Connect, and Shiva's LanRover and NetModem remote-node servers. You can also use any Windows- or DOS-based third-party remote-access client to connect to your Windows NT or NetWare network (for more information, see "Extend Your Reach," August 1994).

While IBM's OS/2 Warp, Version 3, does not have any built-in remote access, Warp Connect—expected to ship this quarter—will include a LAN Distance remote-access client among other networking features (see "OS/2 Warp and Beyond" in the main introduction to the cover story).

We tested remote-access capabilities using several different servers, including Windows 95, Windows NT, and a Shiva NetModem. All the clients worked as advertised, but you will need a few hours to set up the server and client software. Also, each client you install can require as much as 2MB of additional disk space—a limited resource on most notebook PCs.

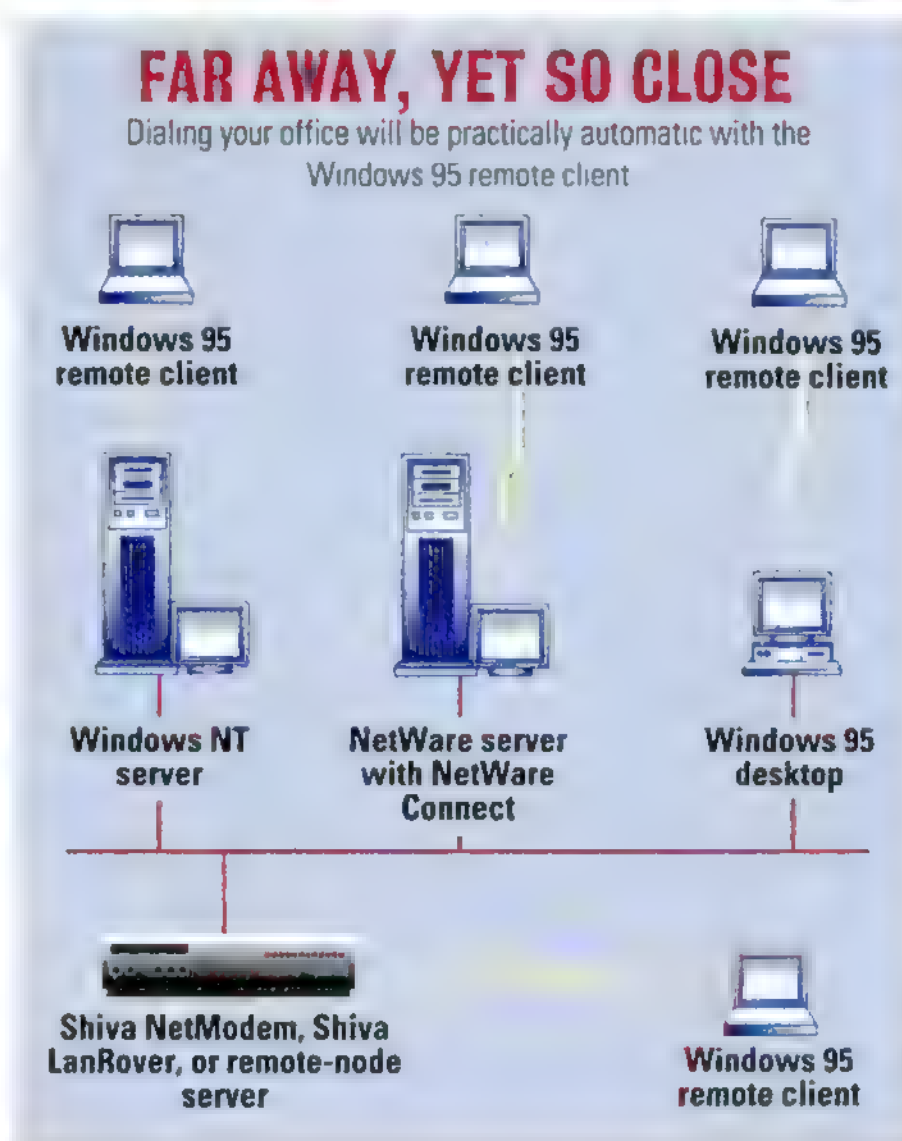
If you don't want to invest in a remote-access server like NetWare Connect, you can configure a standalone Windows 95 PC as a dial-up server. Unlike Windows NT's RAS server, the Windows 95 dial-up server has no IP routing, and you're limited to one connection at a time. Once connected to the Windows 95 dial-up PC, you can use the System Policy editor for network maintenance, and send and receive Microsoft Exchange e-mail (see the sidebar "Dawn of the Universal Client?").

You connect to a Windows NT RAS server with the same client software you use to dial up a Windows 95 server. But using Windows NT as your access server offers more power and flexibility, with up to 256 concurrent connections, simultaneous IP and IPX routing, and the ability to use high-speed X.25 and ISDN links.

Windows 95's Plug and Play capabilities also will make

linking your PC into the network easier than ever. (See "Windows 95 Plug and Play: Effortless Upgrades" in this issue.) You won't have to guess at modem setup strings or try to find the right NDIS interface software.

Like IBM's OS/2 Warp, Windows 95 includes Card and Socket Service drivers for PC Cards (the new name for PCMCIA cards). The built-in card and socket services allow Windows 95 to determine what type of PC Card you have in your notebook and let you add and remove adapters without turning off your notebook or rebooting. Windows 95 can also determine when you are disconnected from the network and automatically unload the network drivers to make the extra memory available. □



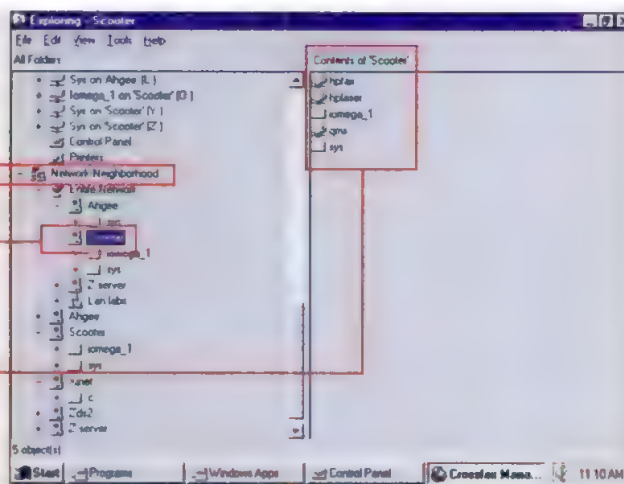
The Network Neighborhood

You can use the Explorer in Windows 95 to view the Network Neighborhood, which lists all of the available servers, domains, and workgroups on your network and their contents.

1 The Network Neighborhood can be expanded in hierarchical views. It's a logical extension of your PC on the network.

2 Connect to any server or workgroup (to which you have access rights) by double-clicking on its icon.

3 To access volumes, files, and other network resources, click on their icons in the contents window.



does with Windows for Workgroups. You can use third-party drivers for different networks, but these typically will run in real mode and so will be slower and more fragile.

PCs running Windows 95 can share disk drives and attached printers with NetWare, Windows NT, or Windows for Workgroups clients without changing any software in the clients. A utility called NetWare File and Print Services responds to requests from NetWare clients, and Windows Network File and Print Services does the same for Windows network clients. Unfortunately, you can't install both Windows' and NetWare's file and print service on the same Windows 95 PC. Network administrators should note that sharing is not a default, and you can elect not to install the server capabilities.

HOW WELL IT NETWORKS

Does all this connectivity stuff work as Microsoft claims? For the most part, yes. We were able to connect easily to our respective servers when running the appropriate protocol—IPX/SPX for NetWare, NetBEUI for LAN Server, or any of the protocols for NT Server. We were also able to use the built-in TCP/IP stack for accessing the Internet. But implementation differences prevented us from logging into a NetWare server using the TCP/IP software. Microsoft

claims that Novell implements the IP stack differently.

Windows NT and Windows 95 IPX protocols worked fine, and we could connect to both NetWare and Windows NT file servers. Windows NT and Windows 95 both also provide a built-in driver for LAN Manager networks, but to use any LAN Manager utilities you will have to use the optional real-mode driver. OS/2 Warp does not provide client interfaces for network operating systems, but expect to see them later with Warp Connect.

The Windows 95 NetWare client soft-

ware also executes your NetWare login script and—like the other operating systems—allows you to use all the NetWare utilities, such as NetAdmin, Syscon, Pconsole, and Fconsole. Only Windows 95, however, has a built-in utility to execute your login script. Unfortunately, Windows 95 cannot load any TSRs that may be in your login script. You'll have to launch them from your AUTOEXEC.BAT or another batch file.

Third-party drivers are also available for Windows 95, but these will typically run in conventional memory and thus be slower. Also, there's no guarantee third-party drivers will comply with NDIS, Microsoft's Network Driver Interface Specification, which defines how network drivers should be written and allows multiple protocol stacks to share one adapter. NDIS now uses a new architecture for smaller drivers. These drivers can also now automatically detect and configure an adapter through NDIS's inclusion of card and socket services.

SECURITY: TWO LEVELS

Peer-to-peer networks let you quickly share resources such as CD-ROM drives and printers, but you don't want everyone connecting to your PC and playing with your important data. Windows 95 provides two levels of security: share-level and user-level. The *share-level* security is similar to the security found in Windows for Workgroups: If you want to protect a

The Registry: See a Low-Level View

The Registry in Windows 95 stores configuration information, including users' network settings. The users can modify settings in this utility, but it is safer—and easier—to make system changes using another utility, such as the Control Panel.

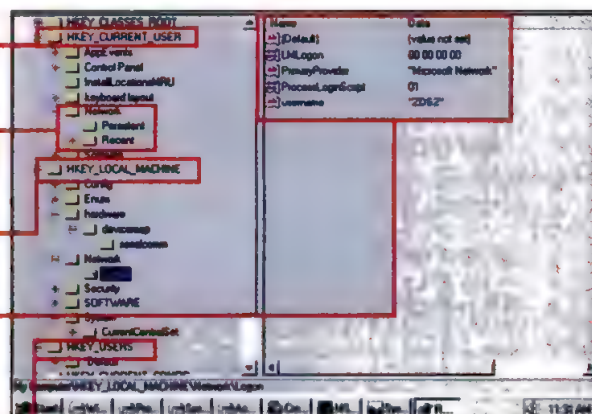
1 Current user settings are in this directory.

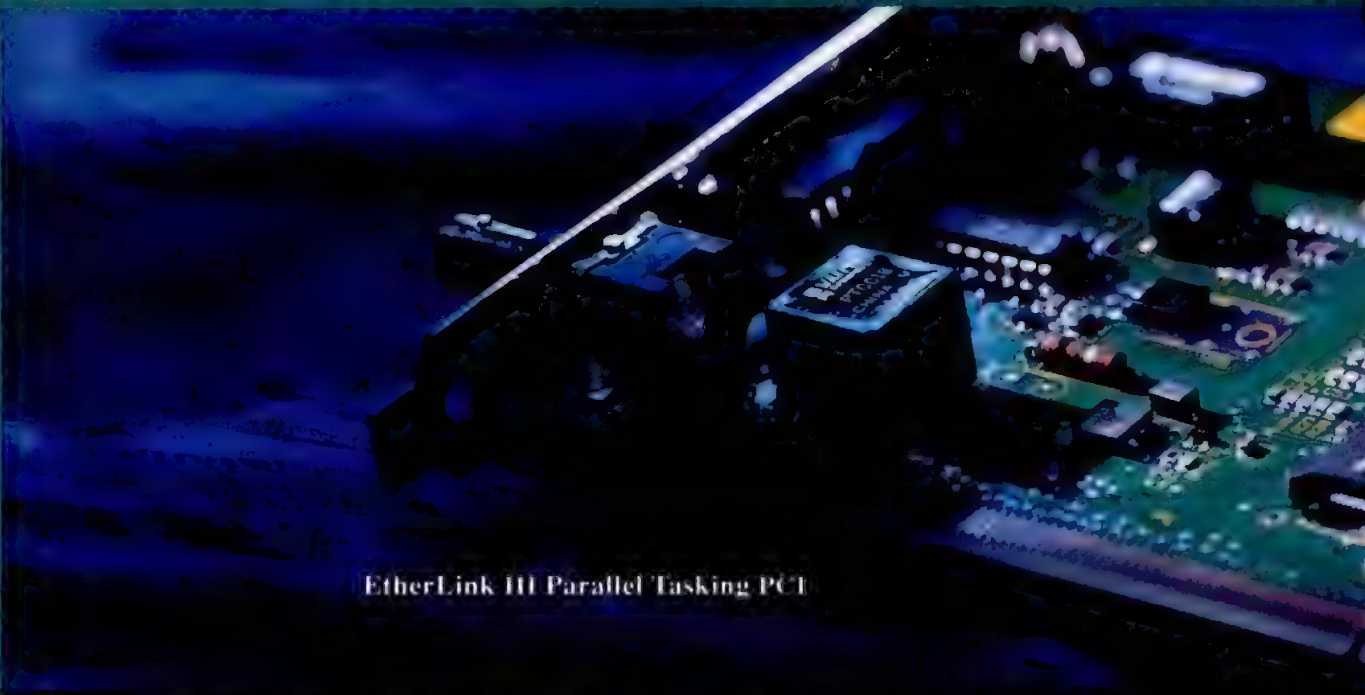
2 In the Network folders, persistent items are accessed at log-on; recent items are accessed as needed.

3 Local machine settings are stored here.

4 The log-on folder shows how this PC is set up to connect to the network.

5 Other users' configurations are stored here for PCs that are shared among users.





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• Dawn of the Universal Client?

By Tony Pompili

Holistic messaging—that's the promise of the Microsoft Exchange Client, a single interface to services and systems such as MCI Mail, CompuServe mail, The Microsoft Network, the Internet, faxes, and yes, the Microsoft Exchange Server. All messages are created, sent, received, read, organized, and deleted through a single interface. *PC Magazine* looked at the prerelease ver-

sions of the Exchange Server and Exchange Client, and we found them complex products that could unite all of your mishmash of mail, BBS, and local communications services into a single application.

❶ With Exchange, you store all your messages—even those from different mail systems—in the same folders.

IN YOUR INTERFACE

The Exchange Client will be built into Windows 95. Although Microsoft hopes it will be used frequently with the Exchange Server in a client/server mail system, the Exchange Client is designed to dovetail with a variety of Microsoft and third-party messaging services and systems including Microsoft Mail, the Internet, and CompuServe. (For an overview of the Exchange Server and Microsoft's messaging strategy, see "Four Paths to Messaging," *PC Magazine*, April 25, 1995.) In addition to the Windows 95 Exchange Client, Microsoft plans to

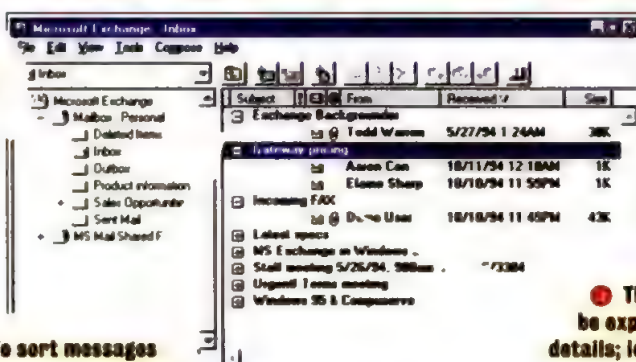
ship Windows 3.1 and DOS versions, which we also had a chance to see.

Unlike yesterday's e-mail, the Exchange Client goes beyond the LAN. Sitting on top of Microsoft's existing mountain of communications APIs and services, the Exchange Client also, for example, will let you send and receive faxes through a fax application or dial up

to other upcoming Windows 95 products, such as Microsoft Mail and Lotus Notes, Release 4. The Client eases maneuvering among folders using File Manager-like tree structures. An outline of the folder contents appears in the View window pane to the right. Views are completely customizable; you can move columns and sort messages within each View.

The companions to Views are Forms, the templates used for entering messages. The Exchange Client comes with a series of default Forms, the most basic of which is a

The Exchange Client: Bundle Your Mail



❷ To sort messages in a folder by a category such as Subject, just click here on the column. You can also display discussion threads.

❸ The outline view can be expanded to show more details; icons indicate document type and attachments.

CompuServe to collect mail. As with network back-end services, the Client makes this happen with hooks into Microsoft's Telephony APIs (TAPI). This architecture for supporting local communications through the Client is also key to Microsoft's remote-access strategy. The Client will be able to dial into Exchange Servers and Microsoft Mail post offices using Microsoft's Dial-Up Networking, also known as Remote Access Services (RAS).

The Client has a look and feel similar

Microsoft Mail-like message form for creating e-mail messages. With the Exchange Server, Microsoft will ship Exchange Electronic Forms applications for Windows 95 and Windows 3.1 that create forms using Visual Basic code. Forms we saw allowed users to create buttons, tabs, and even graphics with pointer-sensitive hot spots.

The Exchange Client provides other basic capabilities, such as searching and filtering to process messages automatically. For example, similar to cc:Mail's Rules, a filter can automatically place

resource such as a subdirectory or a printer, you simply assign a password to that resource. Unfortunately, share-level security does not allow you to control access to individual files.

User-level security assigns a set of privileges to a specific user ID and provides file-level security. To implement user-level security, Windows 95 employs a concept known as *pass-through validation*, meaning the user information comes from a NetWare or Windows NT server. Pass-

through security eliminates the need to reconfigure groups, user names, and passwords. You can use the same security design for your Windows 95 servers as you do for your Windows NT and NetWare servers.

If you are using file and print services for NetWare, then your validation server must be a NetWare file server. If you are using file and print services for Windows networks, then you will need a Windows NT server.

When you install user-level security, Windows 95 requires you to provide a NetWare or Windows NT server name. Windows 95 uses the pass-through security model to gather user and group information. To connect to a Windows 95 server configured for user-level security, you must have rights to either a Windows NT or a NetWare server on the same network.

If you do not have a Windows NT or a NetWare server on your network, you

messages from your boss in a high-priority folder.

The Client's drop-and-drag implementation makes it possible to file documents quickly and is especially interesting when storing application documents. When we dragged a Word document into the View pane, OLE properties such as document title and author came with it. These properties were then available as View columns, which means that documents could be organized according to the detailed information provided by the OLE properties.

Microsoft has established rich-text messaging with a vengeance. Both the Exchange Client and Exchange Server support a wide array of rich-text tools that allowed us to change fonts and paragraph formats, as well as other tools for bulleted and listed items similar to what's available in Word for Windows. The Exchange Server supports these rich-text formats, but not all third-party back-end services will support the same formatting.

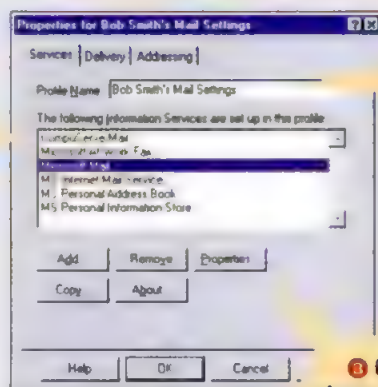
ONE FOR ALL

Besides working with the Exchange Server, the Client will snap into a wide range of non-Exchange Server services, including Microsoft Mail and CompuServe mail. Using MAPI 1.0 as the layer between the front end and back end, Microsoft's Service Provider Interface (SPI) will hook third-party services into the Exchange Client. Service Providers will come as drivers, like Windows printer drivers, allowing users to mix

and match the services they use.

We were able to customize our own group of Service Providers by defining a user profile. An Exchange Client can have one or more profiles that tell the

Pick a Profile—or Two



client what Service Providers to use. Microsoft has not announced which Service Providers will come with Windows 95, but support for Internet mail is expected. Other messaging services such as America Online, CompuServe, and SkyTel are currently working on their own drivers, which are expected to be available when Windows 95 ships. The Client will not include the Exchange Server Service Provider, available only to Exchange Server customers.

The SPI also lets providers add custom messaging features. For example, Exchange will allow users to create custom forms, such as an expense or contact management form. Exchange Server customers will get the Microsoft Electronic Forms development application to create these forms,

can't implement user-level security. If that's the case, you'll find that other peer LANs such as LANtastic offer stronger security than Windows 95's share-level security. So the security of Windows 95 on its own is a mixed bag.

PEER-TO-PEER NETWORKING

As with Windows for Workgroups and Windows NT, Windows 95 lets you share files and resources with other similarly equipped users. Windows 95 goes further

and lets you share files and printers with NetWare-based network clients. OS/2 Warp currently does not provide peer-to-peer networking, though IBM does have plans to add it in OS/2 Warp Connect.

Think of Windows 95's peer-to-peer services as a 32-bit upgrade to the same network features available in Windows for Workgroups. You can use the Windows file and print services in Windows 95 to share files, printers, and CD-ROM drives among networked PCs running

THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

Because it acts like any other messaging provider, the Exchange Server manifests itself subtly in the Exchange Client. The most apparent interface feature of the Client is the Public Folders, which anyone with appropriate Exchange

1 In your mail settings, you can set up multiple profiles; when you're on the road, Exchange can dial up your mail via modem.

Server rights can create. We were able to create a public folder and assign permissions for using the folders. Public folders can be used as discussion databases or public document stores, similar in function to the local document folders in the Client.

2 Click here to change the properties of the Information Services.

To set up the Server you use the Exchange Administrator, a Windows 95 application. Like the Client, the Administrator displays the hierarchy of the Exchange network. To distribute network access rights logically, the Administrator divides server administration tasks by enterprise, site, and server. For example, you can allow local administrators to create and edit Exchange users at their site but not modify users' accounts at other sites.

We were able to create new users easily with the Administrator. Microsoft has built-in Windows NT hooks that turn what could be a multistep user-creation process into just a few steps. We could set Windows NT to bring up Exchange's new-user administration program automatically whenever we added a new NT user, instead of separately creating a NetWare user and then creating a user on the e-mail post office. □

Workgroups and Windows NT. You don't have to add any software to your existing Windows network, and you can use the same tools to connect to and browse your existing Windows network.

You also can connect all your existing NetWare clients to a PC running Windows 95. The Windows network in Windows 95 is a true peer-to-peer network, but the file and print services for NetWare clients that cannot be loaded with the peer-to-peer networking are based on

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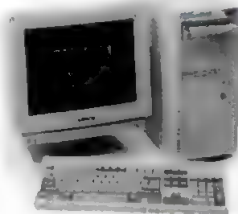
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a server-centric model. Confused? That means any DOS- or Windows-based NetWare client can connect to a Windows 95 PC running file and print services for NetWare, but the opposite is not possible: A Windows 95 PC cannot log into a NetWare client.

As a peer-to-peer LAN, Windows 95 represents a considerable step up from Windows for Workgroups. At the same time, its functionality still falls short of what you'll find in standalone peer LANs such as LANtastic or PowerLAN.

MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

In addition to security features, network managers look for management tools. Windows 95 has plenty, particularly Netwatch, System Monitor, Registry Editor, and System Policy Editor.

Netwatch lets you manage users' network connections to Windows 95 servers from a local or remote PC. You can connect to a Windows 95 server and monitor how many users are connected and what files they have open. You can even disconnect users remotely. Netwatch is a great tool for monitoring system performance and network usage. For instance, if a user complains of a slow PC, you can determine if too many clients are straining that PC's resources.

System Monitor lets you locally or remotely monitor all the system performance attributes on your Windows 95 PCs, including memory usage, cache, network packets, and a host of other useful

data. The information is provided in a graphical format, and you can select a bar chart, numeric chart, or line graph. System Monitor is an ideal tool for troubleshooting.

To ease the transition to Windows 95 for the administrator, Microsoft has added a global database called System Policies within the Windows 95 Registry. You can set each user's interface and rights to certain network resources. You can even have different interfaces and network rights for multiple users sharing a single PC. By controlling what the users see on their screens, you can simplify some processes and eliminate functions that certain users should not have. For instance,

you might want to prevent some users from offering up their PCs as servers.

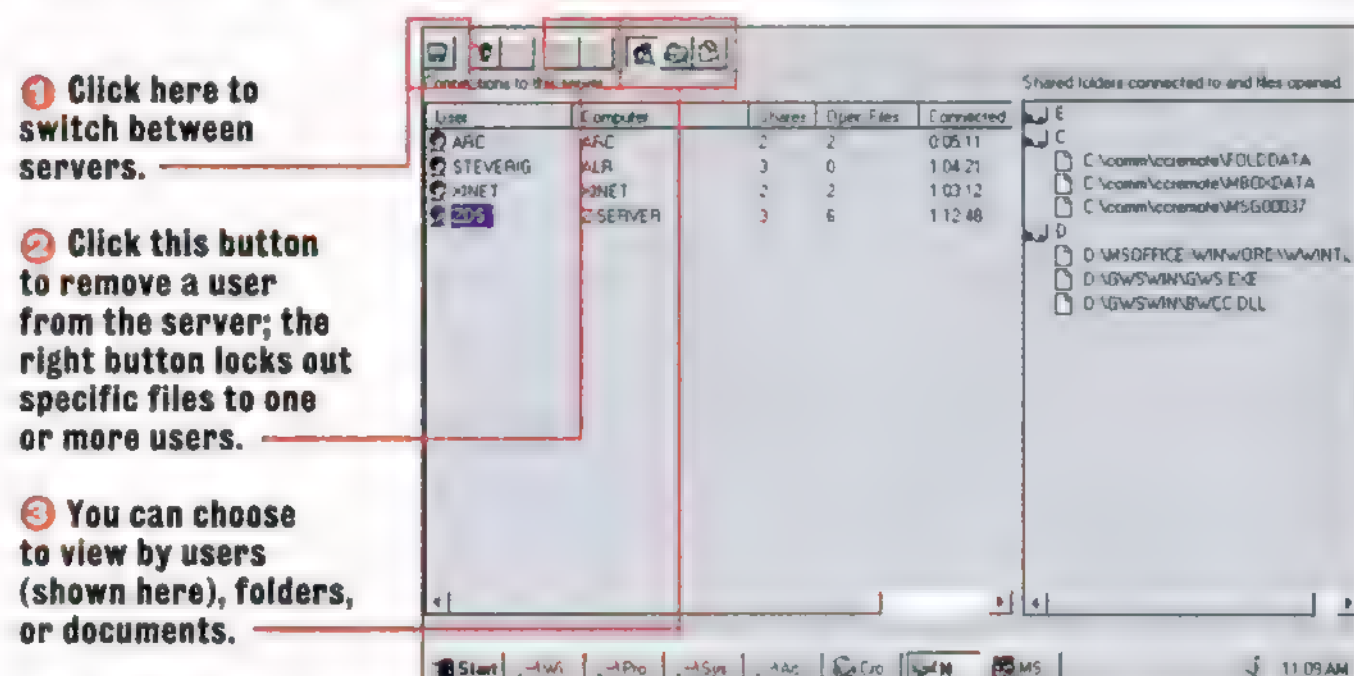
In addition to the built-in management utilities, you can use a Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) console, such as HP OpenView for Windows, for remote management and control of your Windows 95 client PCs. The Windows 95 SNMP agent supports MIB II and an extensible MIB that developers can use to create custom MIBs for Windows 95 clients. You have probably heard about the Desktop Management Interface (DMI), but you won't be seeing it for a while: The DMI agent will not ship in the initial release of Windows 95. When it does, DMI products may take advantage of the more fundamental Plug and Play information file created by Plug and Play products.

NETWORK CLIENT OF CHOICE

As a network client, Windows 95 is top-rate, but upgrading will cost you time and money. The network features bundled with Windows 95 are impressive. You don't often see a single operating system that includes remote access, multiple protocols, and network drivers, as well as security, performance monitoring, and network management. Compared with the other operating systems we look at in this review, Windows 95 is definitely the network client to beat. It's ahead of Windows NT and clearly in front of OS/2 Warp, although the coming Warp Connect should narrow the gap. □

Netwatch: Take Control

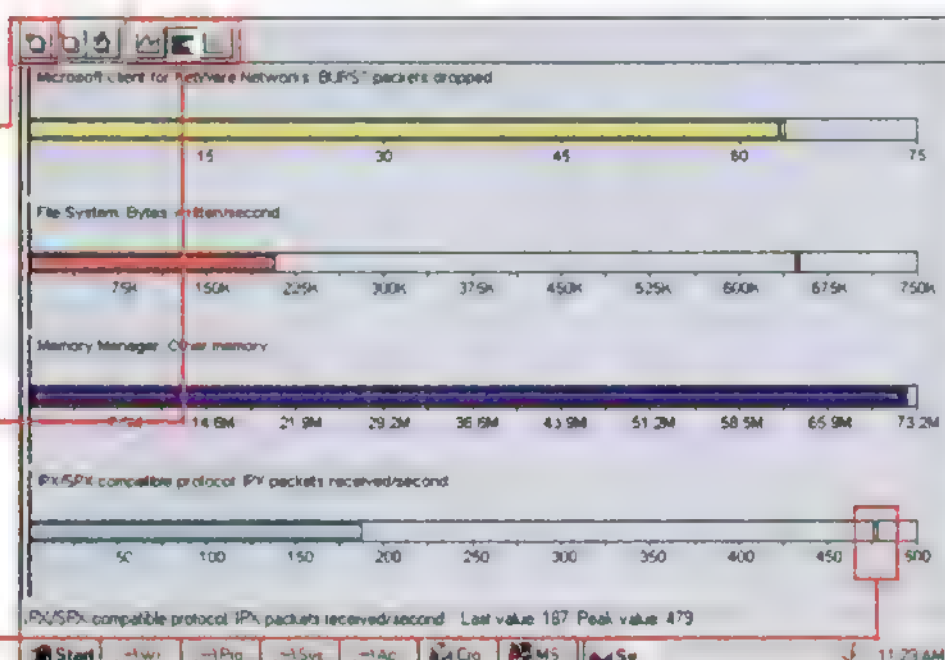
Network administrators can use Netwatch to monitor connections to any Windows 95 server on the network, and to track the files and applications they're using



System Monitor: Check Performance

The System Monitor replaces WinMeter. It allows you to track any of about 100 levels of system and network performance for any Windows 95 client or server on the network, locally or remotely.

- 1 Click here to connect to a PC that you want to monitor.
- 2 Customize the view: You can see the information as a line graph, a bar chart (shown here), or a numeric chart.
- 3 This mark indicates the peak level for each system resource displayed.





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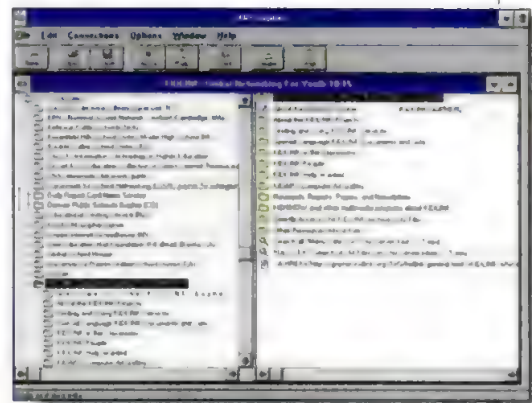
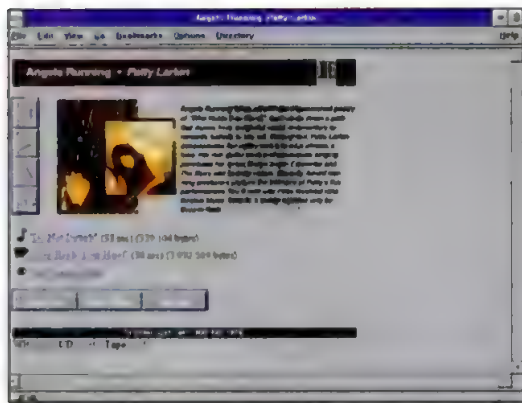
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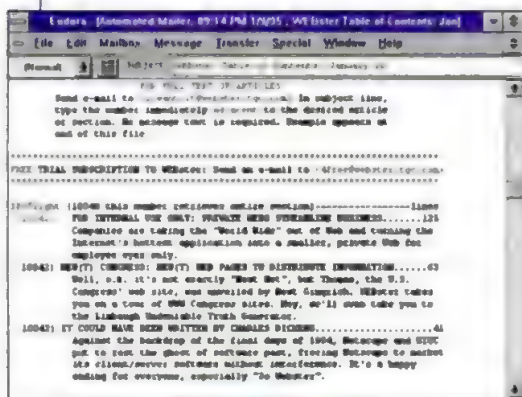
THE

BUILD A WEB PRESENCE to give your customers a colorful way to get your information.

INTERNET

LET CUSTOMERS DIG THROUGH YOUR DATA to download entire documents or files.

MEANS BUSINESS



LEVERAGE E-MAIL to give your customers an instant point of contact.

However you do it, establishing a business presence on the Internet is effective at extending your reach.

By Rick Ayre and Don Willmott

If you have spent any time exploring the Internet, you understand how newsgroups, World-Wide Web sites, and e-mail have given 20 million people access to an amazingly wide variety of information. Now comes the next step: How are you going to take advantage of the on-line world to let all those people know about your business? Thousands of companies have set up Web home pages in the past six months or so. Looking at them, you may wonder if it's already too late for you to stake your own claim. But there's no need to fear; the on-line revolution hasn't left your business in the dust. In fact, the tools that will help you give your business an Internet presence are just starting to appear in force.

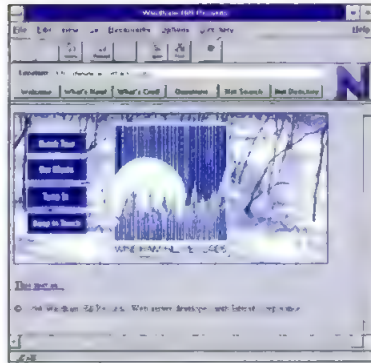
The Internet was designed to connect people so that they could

How Your Business Can Look on the Internet

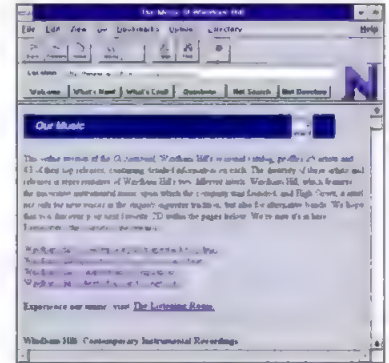
You can make your business accessible to your customers over the Internet in a variety of ways. Each strategy has a different look and feel and serves a distinct purpose. To have a successful on-line presence, your business may need to experiment.

WORLD-WIDE WEB

Web servers offer a dynamic way to present information, letting users view text and graphics and even hear sounds. By using the Web, you can give your customers access to a wealth of information. From your home page, they can link to related pages of your choice.



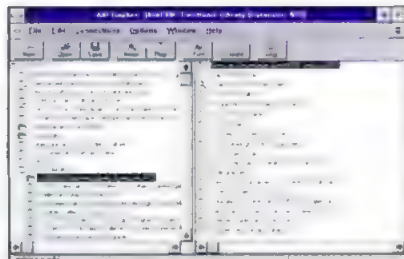
STEP 1 Windham Hill Records' Web home page uses graphics to welcome potential customers in a style they can readily identify with Windham Hill.



STEP 2 Using hypertext, users browse the system to get details about a certain style of music or to find artists they already know.

GOPHER SERVERS

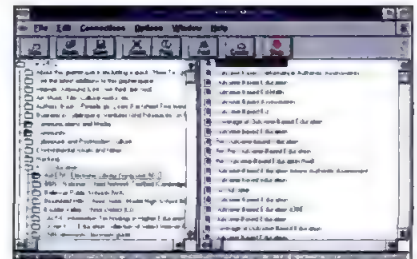
Besides providing full-text indexing systems, Gopher servers help users quickly navigate mountains of text to find the specific documents they need.



STEP 1 ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center), a federally funded national information system, provides access to an extensive body of education-related resources.



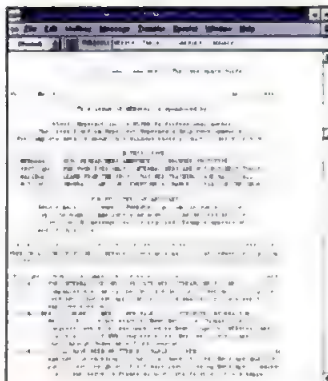
STEP 2 Gopher servers let users perform full-text searches, such as this one on the word *outcome*.



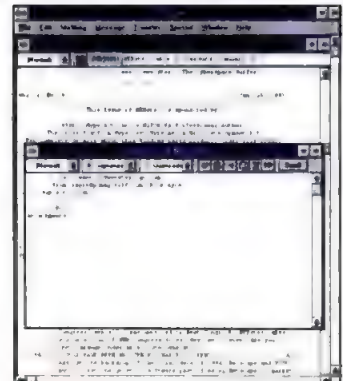
STEP 3 In this example, ERIC returns a list of documents that pertain specifically to outcome-related education.

E-MAIL SYSTEMS

E-mail response systems are built on List-serv-like software. A mailing list can be distributed to hundreds or even thousands of users—or subscribers—who want it. Then the response systems let users request just the data they want, making the mailing list both active and passive.



STEP 1 Every Tuesday, the WEBster table of contents is delivered to a subscriber's e-mail box. A subscriber can review items in the current issue.

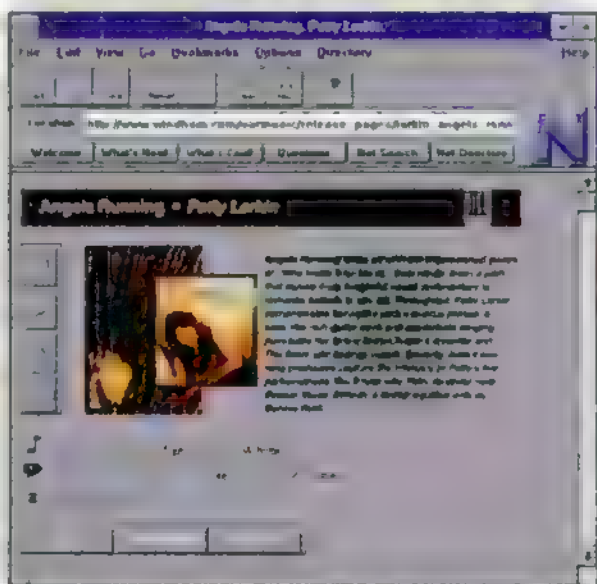


STEP 2 Then the subscriber sends e-mail asking for a particular article to the WEBster e-mail robot.

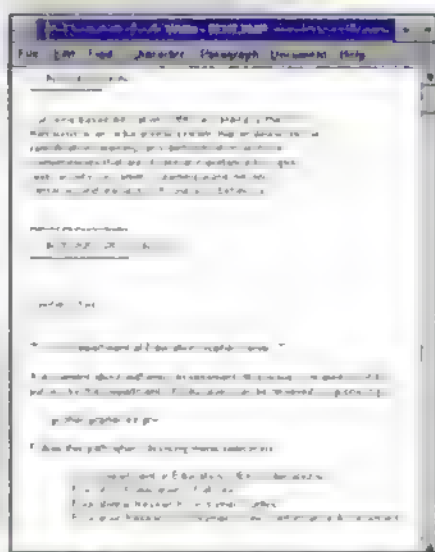
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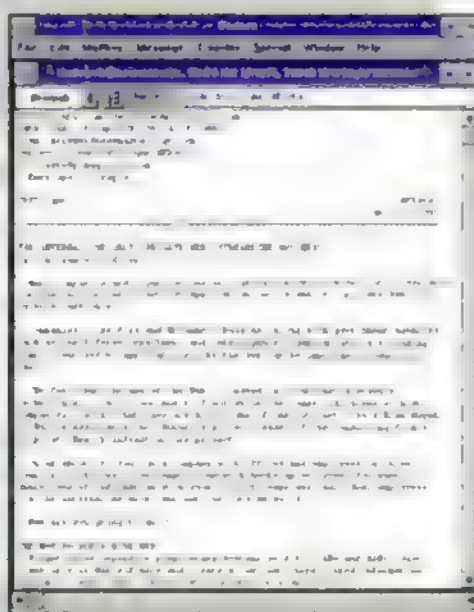
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STEP 3 Users can then listen to a sample from an artist's newest CD or see a video clip of the artist in concert.



STEP 4 Users can then open up the files they want and do the research they need.



STEP 3 The article is sent via return e-mail. There's no need to send any information that is not specifically requested by the subscriber.

communicate with each other—to get information from point A to point B. As a result, there are now tools designed specifically for the Internet that make it simple to manage the task of providing information. It's becoming as easy to be an information provider as it is to be an information consumer.

There are those who argue—largely as a result of the information services we talk about here—that the Internet is about to redefine advertising and marketing. An audience of 11 million U.S. Internet users is still no match for 200 million prime-time TV viewers. But when it comes to marketing, think of the Internet as more like a telephone than a TV. You make yourself available and users contact you.

The Internet provides a great way to publish a low-cost, tightly focused message to a technically knowledgeable audience. It fits like a glove if you are a company like Intel, for example. Soon, businesses will be using the Internet as a way to reach out to exactly whom they want to reach, in whatever demographic group they seek.

THREE WAYS TO GO

In this story, we look at three distinct methods of sharing your company's message with the Internet audience. In "Building a Web Presence," we look at products that help you set up servers for the World-Wide Web, where you will find the infomercials of the Internet, and the best place to grab, engage, and entertain an audience. Using a Hypertext Transport Protocol (HTTP) server, you can place hypertext documents in full view. Today people are using such servers on the Internet to provide information to large general audiences—and on their local area networks to provide informa-

tion to people within their organizations. The Web is the place to be if you want to have a graphical impact, and want your information easy to use and navigate. Unfortunately, the tools for Web publishing are new and shallow, so Web publishing is not always the best base to build information services on.

In "Letting Customers Dig Through Your Data," we discuss strategies for publishing large amounts of primarily text-based information: Full-text search engines, for example, make it easy to pinpoint just the information you need from a large sea of data. Gopher servers provide a great way to organize and present text-based information that fits a hierarchical, tree-like structure.

In "Leveraging E-Mail," we explore ways that e-mail, the virtual link that connects just about everyone on-line, is being used in novel ways to manage the information flow. Using the Internet's Listserv feature (or the Listserv-like Majordomo), companies are efficiently blasting information out to subscriber lists even while letting the subscribers specify what information they want to receive.

Combined, these three types of tools

Our Contributors: RICK AYRE and DON WILLMOTT are executive editors and BEN GOTTESMAN is a technical director at *PC Magazine*. JILL H. ELLSWORTH is the author of *The Internet Business Book* and *Marketing on the Internet: Multimedia Strategies on the WWW*. SEAN GONZÁLEZ is a systems support programmer at Information Access Company. KEVIN REICHARD has written 14 books for MIS:Press on various operating-system topics. TED STEVENSON was the senior associate editor in charge of this story, and AMARENDRA SINGH was the project leader.

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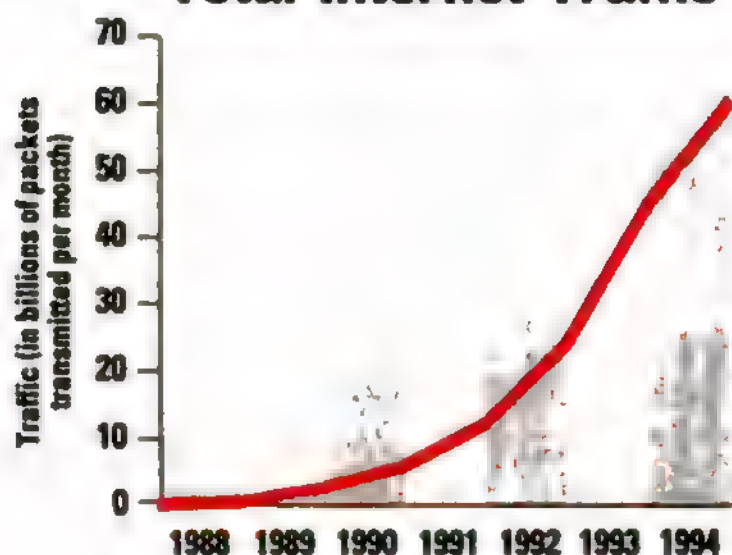
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THE INTERNET'S EXPLOSIVE GROWTH

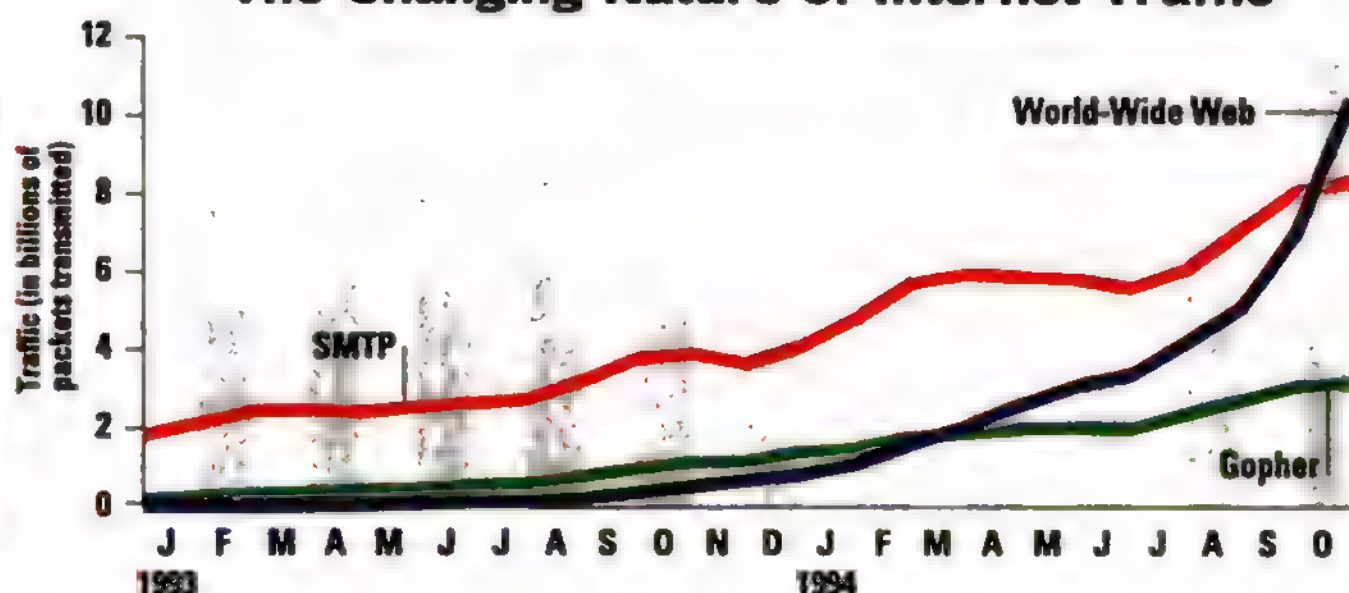
The graph on the left shows how total data traffic on the Internet has grown: from 85 million data packets a month in January 1988 to over 60 billion packets a month in January 1995. The graph on the right shows how three selected types of transmission have mushroomed over the past two years. Although the volume of

regular e-mail and file transfers has grown steadily, it is the World-Wide Web that has suddenly become the fastest-growing part of the Internet, thanks largely to the recent availability of Windows-based Web-browsing tools.

Total Internet Traffic



The Changing Nature of Internet Traffic



add up to a complete information-management solution. Some are even easy enough to be used for self-publishing.

Like many other types of Internet-related software products, they are changing fast. The category is just now attracting commercial developers. Some of the servers have been around for years, but until recently, they've been available pri-

marily for Unix systems and have been distributed in source code, with their developers charging little or nothing.

The products we discuss run on Windows NT. Unix products claim the majority of the market today, but they aren't easy to use, and many are targeted for just one operating system, like NeXTStep. For a discussion of the ad-

vantages Unix does have as a platform for Web servers, see the sidebar "Is Unix a Better Place to Be?" We also found one NetWare-based and two OS/2-based servers in prerelease; none were ready for evaluation.

WEB SERVERS

To see Web servers in action, you need only visit a few sites we listed in our recent tour of 100 hot Web sites. (See First Looks, April 11, 1995.) One good example is Windham Hill Records' server at <http://www.windham.com>. This site gives you a clear picture of the kinds of things you can do on the Web that you can't do in conventional advertising and marketing: presenting sound and graphics, for example, or letting users pick the way they want to search the information.

The Windham Hill Web site demonstrates two more important concepts: First, as yet, you can't usually buy directly on the Web. Though you browse online to find the information to make a buying decision, you still need to call a toll-free phone number to order the recording you want. Second, the Windham Hill site was developed and is maintained by contractors who charge for the service.

If you're thinking multimedia—or need to show off dynamic data—think Web server. If you're a small company, think of contracting the Web site out. (See the sidebar "Three Routes to a Web Presence.") If you're thinking of

HIGHLIGHTS

Business on the Internet

Don't make the mistake of ignoring the Internet as one component in your business's overall marketing strategy. Thousands of businesses have already staked on-line claims.

INTERNET TRAFFIC continues to grow at an amazing pace. Now is a good time, therefore, to start thinking about how your business can have a presence on-line. It's still early in the game, and there isn't much digital cash changing hands yet, so the best business use of the Internet is as a marketing tool rather than as a selling tool. The Internet is one more place where customers can reach out to get the information they need.

THE WORLD-WIDE WEB is the place to be if you want your business to have a truly interactive look and feel on-line. The cost of setting up a Web

server will vary widely, depending on how much of the work you do in-house and how much you contract out. You can also set up an information server to let customers find and download files, or use e-mail to send specific information to individual customers.

THE PRODUCTS that make it possible to set up an on-line presence are just beginning to appear in Windows NT versions. Until now, most Internet server tools have been designed for Unix systems, but this is changing rapidly.

SECURITY is always a concern, and it should be. You don't want to expose your vital business functions to on-line outlaws. Fortunately, it's possible to set up firewalls and other security tools that can provide comfortable, though not perfect, levels of protection.



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There's no way to predict with any certainty just how the Internet, and the communications technologies that flourish on it and because of it, will change the way we do business. One way to prepare for tomorrow is to use what works today. Though we look at three strategies in the following stories, don't conclude that you have to choose just one type. Your perfect set of information services will likely be some unique combination of the three.

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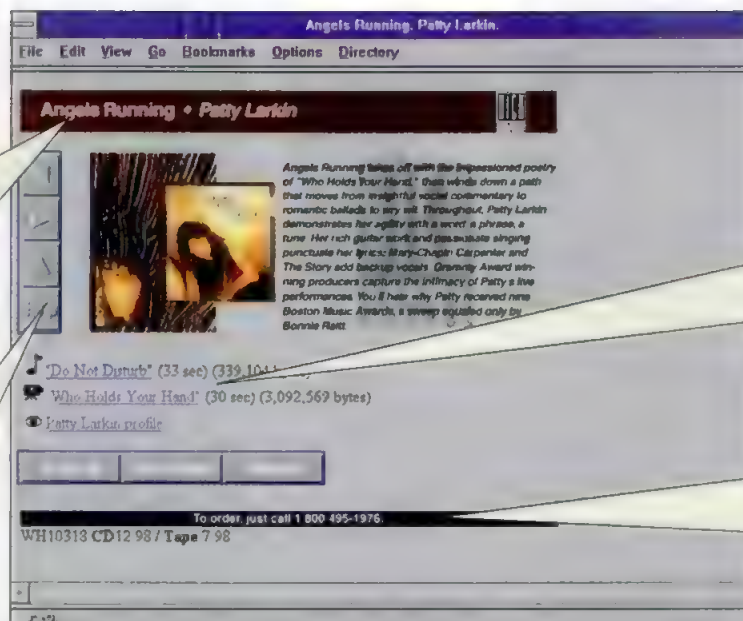
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► The Angels Running Web page includes graphics, text, and hyperlinks to other pages at Windham Hill Records

► A model Web page presents users with the big picture but also helps them get to and from the page, in this case using graphical representations of the buttons that they might find on a CD player

► Links to sound and video clips are labeled clearly, and users are given information about the links so they can decide if they're on a connection that's fast enough to appreciate the links

► The final logical link—the whole point of the page, in fact (at least as far as Windham Hill is concerned)—leads users to the point of purchase a toll-free phone number

Building a WEB PRESENCE

By Sean González

You can get a big jump on your business competition by establishing a "presence" on the Internet to advertise your products, publicize your business, or sell information and information access.

The World-Wide Web is the most popular of several Internet services you might use to gain such a presence. Its Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and Hypertext Markup Language (HTML), working together, let you build electronic documents that can, in turn, harness the power of other Internet protocols like SMTP, File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Gopher, Wide Area Information Service (WAIS), and telnet.

Using these tools you could, for example, build a system that handles multiple sales chores automatically. It might begin by sending to customers who request

your Web home page an HTML document that lets them select *Product Sales* from a list of choices. The server could then return a page with descriptions—even pictures—of your products, plus pricing, an e-mail address for a sales contact, and the option to download a complete catalog. This system would use a number of protocols to carry out its various tasks. If a customer clicked the sales contact e-mail address, for example, SMTP would carry the message. If he requested a copy of your catalogue, it would be sent via FTP. It's even possible to build in real-time customized views of your content using powerful search engines like Gopher and WAIS.

BIG COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL

The software actually managing the links between your various HTTP-served documents would be a background routine run-

ning on the HTTP server. In Unix parlance, this is called an *HTTP daemon*; in the Microsoft Windows NT world, it's called an *HTTP server*.

Responding to the explosive growth of the Web as a business venue, commercial developers have begun to build and offer new and improved HTTP service modules at a sprightly pace. In this article, we review three native Windows NT-based HTTP servers. Any of these products can handle the basic job of maintaining your HTML documents on the Web, but their extra features will determine how easy this turns out to be.

Few products are available for Windows NT today, and though the ones we reviewed should satisfy many users' needs, the issue of security hasn't been adequately addressed in any of them (see "Is Unix a Better Place to Be?"). NetPublisher, Version 1.0, offers great value-added content-management features to build searchable content and unsurpassed graphical editing tools; this server is most suitable for library and editorial content. HTTPS is a general-purpose server that will meet most users' needs. SerWeb is a basic, introductory-level server that will help beginners get started on the Web quickly and effortlessly.

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ferent focus. Expect to see a follow-up roundup as more companies release Windows NT versions of their servers. Things will change quickly in this market.

Digital Equipment Corp.

Digital Road Map for Windows NT

BY SEAN GONZÁLEZ

Of the products we evaluated, Digital Road Map (DRM) for Windows NT has the best collection of Internet utilities for building a robust World-Wide Web server. This freeware CD-ROM from Digital Equipment Corp. is a superb one-stop tools-and-information resource, and the Internet utilities aren't its only attraction. The general-purpose utilities that are included will help increase productivity on your Microsoft Windows NT system, and DRM's many ports of Unix commands will give you a smooth migration path.

DRM is much simpler to use than any other product we reviewed. Because it's organized using HTML documents, you just type "roadmap" in Program Manager's File|Run dialog and Digital's Web browser takes over. From there, you can access the entire CD-ROM. If you're a novice Web manager, this is a great way to learn how to use a Web browser and the Web itself.

Installing selected complimentary software couldn't be easier. Each product is listed separately and by category in one of the pseudo-Web pages on the CD-ROM. By selecting a product, you get a page that includes a brief product description, a link that invokes WinZip (a copy is included with the product) to view or extract the contents of the distribution .ZIP file, a contact's phone number or e-mail address, the FTP site where the distribution can be found (great information to have if you need technical support or an upgrade), a link to the product documentation, and another link to execute the product if it can run from the CD-ROM.

LEARNING THE WEB

In addition to information on Digital software and hardware products and complimentary software, Digital Road Map for Windows NT contains excellent Web documentation. It explains in great detail such items as Uniform Resource Locators (URLs), Uniform Resource Identifiers

• NetPublisher •

This is a young and growing category; within a year there could easily be three times as many Web-server competitors. Today, the best overall solution is Ameritech Library Services' NetPublisher. No other

Web server product is as good at managing your Web content, especially if you're a novice with the Web.

To use NetPublisher effectively, you must use its editor to structure your data in the hierarchical way that it requires. You may find this process imposing and confining, but the effort is worthwhile. The tools you get are excellent, especially the image-map tool that lets you build clickable graphics for your Web pages quickly and easily.

The two other products that we evaluated have unique advantages.

(URIs), HTML, and HTTP specifications.

Digital has put together all the elements that you need to become a Web expert without ever having to scavenge the Internet for the information. Everything you need to build and manage Web content is right at your fingertips. DRM includes copies of several HTML tools, such as restricted versions of HoTMetaL, HTML Assistant, and other Windows HTML editing tools (for more information, see "HTML: Nothing but Net," February 7, 1995).

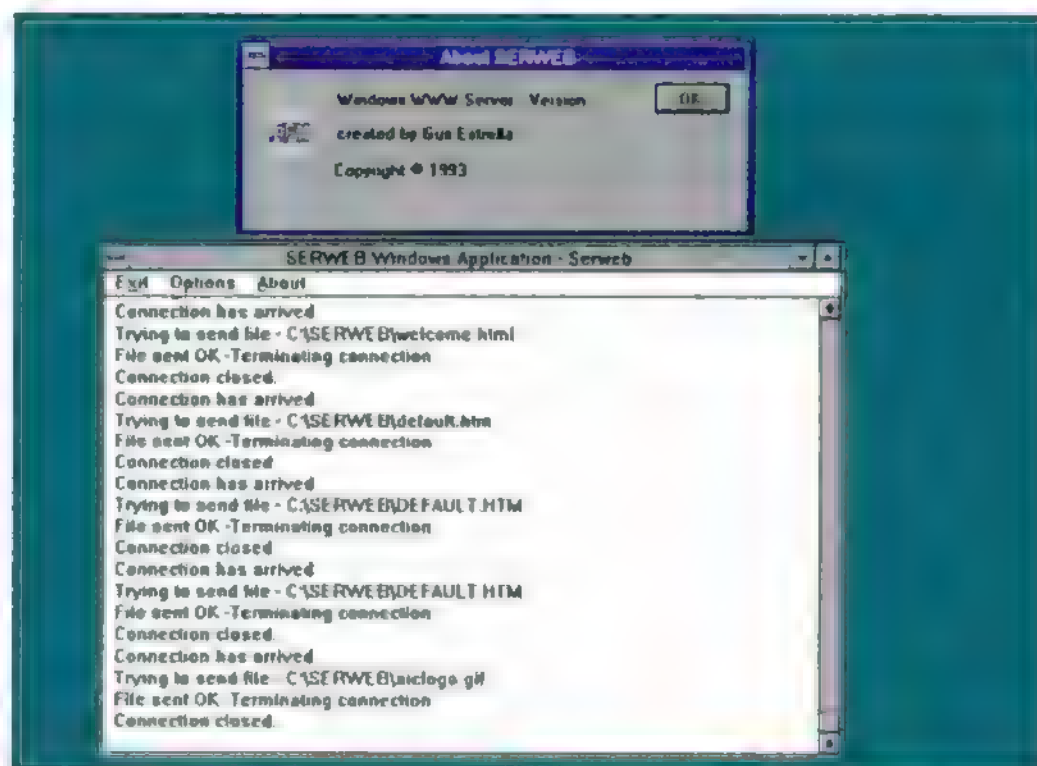
If you come from a Unix environment, you'll appreciate the many ports of Unix development tools. Several scripting languages, such as CSH, Perl, and the Tool Command Language (TCL), are included. Also included are several Unix commands and Whaley, a collection of command-line utilities such as CAT, CHMOD, CP, and DU.

The tools included in the inexpensive Microsoft Windows NT Resource Kit provide just about everything needed to set up a Web server. The only thing that the Kit is missing is an SMTP server. The tools' smooth integration with Windows NT is an advantage. The Digital Road Map for Windows NT CD-ROM is packed with useful utilities, not only for building a Web server but for optimizing Windows NT itself. It's a good one-stop tools-and-information resource. Even the on-line documentation is designed and implemented well.



GETTING SET UP

To set up your Web server, DRM includes several Internet protocol servers—HTTP, WAIS (Wide Area Information Service), Gopher, Finger (a protocol that allows remote users to get information about local users—it's usually considered a security risk, so you may not want to use it), and even a telnet daemon tool. But like the Microsoft Windows NT Resource Kit (reviewed separately), DRM doesn't include an SMTP server.

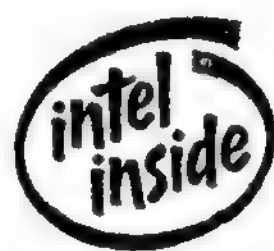


SerWeb, included with Digital Road Map for Windows NT, is a decent tool but isn't for building a heavy-duty World-Wide Web server.



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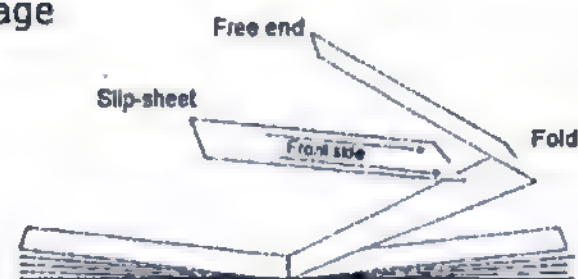


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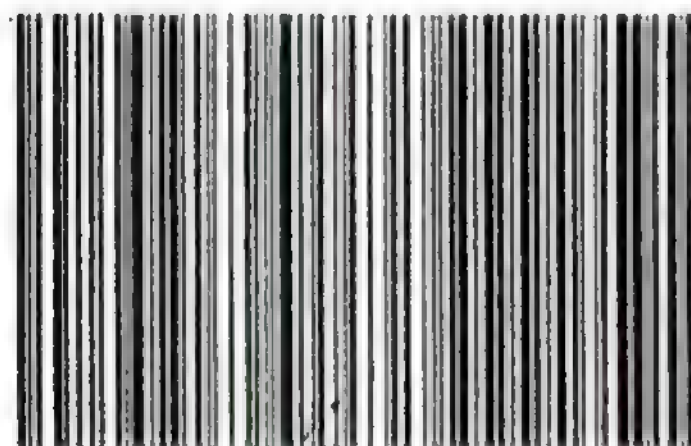
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DRM also includes the European Microsoft Windows NT Academic Centre's (EMWAC) suite of Internet protocol servers. At first, you may not need all the features and power of HTTPS, the Windows NT server of choice, so you may want to use SerWeb.

Gustavo Estrela's SerWeb, Version 0.3, is a simple Microsoft Windows 3.1 HTTP server that was ported to Windows NT by EMWAC. Installing SerWeb is trivial; just copy the distribution files to your Windows NT directory, make changes to the SerWeb .INI file (which includes less than a dozen parameters), and run it as a desktop application. Without having to worry about server-setup issues, you're immediately able to focus on your HTML content. This is a great beginners' server.

Unfortunately, quick setup also means limited functionality. SerWeb is not compliant with HTTP 1.0, which means you won't be able to use all the features of a Web server. You can't use clickable images or Common Gateway Interface (CGI) 1.1 scripts, for example, and there aren't any security options other than the ability to restrict access to only one directory tree in your hard disk.

Suitability to Task: Web Servers

In this up-and-coming category, the three products we evaluated meet different levels of need. The EMWAC tools included in Microsoft Windows NT Resource Kit are mainstream and relatively basic, whereas NetPublisher is moving toward a full Web publishing and distribution solution. We used three primary criteria for evaluating the products regarding power and ease.

Setting up a Web server isn't easy, but it shouldn't have to be impossible. Many businesses that want to establish a presence on the Internet won't be able to afford specialists to get them started. Often a person already on staff will have to become a Web expert, learning the process from scratch. That's why **setup and configuration** is the first and most important task to take into consideration. We look at the complete process of getting a Web server up and running, the set

SerWeb does provide a status window. If enabled, it gives you complete information on the operation of your HTTP server, but it can slow overall server performance and is only available when the server is up and running. This information can't be ex-

ported to a file, however, so you can't use it to get server-utilization statistics.

Although SerWeb doesn't have the direct support for searches that

HTTPS offers, you can still use SerWeb in combination with the EMWAC Gopher and WAIS servers to build searchable content. Because *wais://* and *gopher://* are valid URL types, you can serve HTML documents with SerWeb that make explicit connections to the WAIS and Gopher servers. This isn't as efficient as using a server that offers direct support for search engines, but it may be perfectly suited to your needs.

SerWeb definitely isn't the tool for building a commercial-grade Web server. If your content relies on forms, clickable images, and CGI scripts, you should save yourself time and use HTTPS. But if you're learning how to build a Web server and content, or if all you need is a quick-and-dirty way to serve simple HTML documents to the Web, SerWeb

is your best choice.

As for the overall product, Digital has done an outstanding job assembling DRM. A quick search through the Internet will show you that Digital has selected the most commonly used (and the most useful) Windows NT utilities available for building Internet services.

► **Digital Road Map for Windows NT.** Digital Equipment Corp., 146 Main St., Maynard, MA 01754-2571; 800-344-4825, 508-493-5111; fax, 508-493-8780.

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Microsoft Corp.

Microsoft Windows NT Resource Kit

BY SEAN GONZÁLEZ

If you use the CD-ROM included in the Microsoft Windows NT Resource Kit (WRK) for Windows NT, Version 3.5 (\$149.95), to set yourself up on the Internet, you'll get a great bonus—the European Microsoft Windows NT Academic Centre's (EMWAC) suite of Internet protocol servers. EMWAC's freeware suite includes the Gopher server, the Wide Area Information Service (WAIS) server, the WAIS toolkit, and HTTPS, the freeware HTTP server chosen for Windows NT (available from <ftp://emwac.ed.ac.uk/pub/https> and [include scripting languages. We also look at tools to monitor server performance, log statistics, and provide information about server-usage profiles. All of these tools are important, because they can give you an idea of how well your Web page is doing. The ability to handle file and directory maintenance easily and graphically is another plus.](ftp://sunsite.unc.edu/pub/packages/infosys-</p>
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The Internet, with an estimated 20 million users worldwide, is a big place, and your Web server should be equipped to reach out to the farthest corners of the on-line world. In the **extensibility** task, we look at the Web server's features that allow it to be used outside the context of a simple hypertext-document server. Those features include protocol support and extensions that let you add features through other products. We also look for the level of compliance to the HTTP standard and for security features such as authentication. Security features are becoming a bigger and bigger issue as businesses try to sell products and services over the Internet.

SUITABILITY TO TASK
Digital Road Map for Windows NT

	Power	Ease
Setup and configuration	GOOD	GOOD
Server management	GOOD	GOOD
Extensibility	GOOD	FAIR

SUITABILITY TO TASK
Product Name

	Power	Ease
Setup and configuration	FAIR	FAIR
Server management	GOOD	GOOD
Extensibility	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT

of tools and utilities provided, the ease by which the server can be made to run, and the integration of the product with the operating system. We also look at the package's ability to explain or demonstrate fundamental concepts to the novice. We give extra credit to products providing tools such as HTML editors.

Though at this point in time Unix Web servers still have the upper hand when it comes to management, the new Windows NT-based products for establishing a Web presence are catching up quickly. In the **server management** task, we look at the specific tools provided to manage the Web server. We give good ratings to products that provide support for or

■ Is Unix a Better Place to Be?

By Sean González

On the nuts-and-bolts level where servers work their communications magic, Unix and the Internet have always been more or less synonymous. Suddenly, there's an interloper on the scene—Microsoft Windows NT 3.5—challenging Unix's dominance. Industry passions run high over which is better.

First, don't be misled by Windows NT's current version number, 3.5: It's actually a new operating system, and certainly not as mature as any of Unix's several flavors. Unix has been evolving for more than 20 years, but Windows NT is essentially untested under real-world conditions. As Windows NT does get used under stress conditions, bugs are sure to emerge. But Unix is conceptually a 20-year-old operating system built by committee. Windows NT, by contrast, was built by a dedicated group of technologist-experts to offer big advances in features and manageability.

WHAT'S UNIX GOT

When it comes to the selection of available HTTP-server software packages, Unix beats Windows NT hands down. There are more than a dozen commonly used Unix HTTP servers on the market, but we found only three for Windows NT, and only one of these is commercially available.

Greater variety isn't Unix's only strong selling point, however. Unix-based HTTP-server packages still need to incorporate more secure transaction-processing and access-control options. But some already offer security features, such as data encryption and server authentication, not currently available on Windows NT.

There are some great HTTP-server products in the Unix world. In particular, CERN's HTTP server, created by Ari Luotonen, has impressive security features and caching capabilities that

enhance performance. And people can't stop talking about Netscape's Unix-based HTTP server, which offers features unparalleled by any other HTTP server: data encryption, server authentication, and the emerging Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol.

Among the leading Unix servers—all of which have e-mail, FTP, Gopher, and World-Wide Web servers (but not full-text WAIS servers)—are BSBI's

UNIX WEB SERVERS HAVE THESE ADVANTAGES:

- *They've been around for years.*
- *The source code is available.*
- *You can find lots of free support.*
- *Source-code bug fixes are posted quickly.*
- *You get transaction-logging features.*
- *Server authentication is built in.*
- *Data encryption is available.*
- *They offer more simultaneous connections.*

Internet Server (800-800-4273, 719-593-9445), The Santa Cruz Operation's SCO Global Access (800-726-8649, 408-425-7222), and Morse Telecommunications' Slackware Professional Linux 2.1 (800-606-6773, 516-889-8500).

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY

Despite being relatively young, Windows NT has come a long way in a very short time. We found four companies (Beame & Whiteside, NCSA, Netscape, and Quadralay) hard at work building Windows NT versions of their Unix-based HTTP servers. Some of these will offer the same security and functionality features currently available on the Unix versions. So although Unix has better

variety today, Windows NT-based Web servers will soon offer all the features you want.

The fact that Windows NT is still relatively young is a mixed blessing in many ways. Hackers haven't had the time, or perhaps the interest, to exploit its vulnerabilities, so using Windows NT may result in fewer security problems—to say nothing of less management overhead—than running a Unix Web server.

Running a reasonably secure Unix Web server today means a major investment in terms of research and management overhead. If you don't have staffers with Unix experience, you'll have to hire some or undergo a painful, lengthy learning process to build a secure Unix environment.

Windows NT is pretty secure right out of the box—more so than Unix, actually. And with the aid of the many available books on Windows NT, you should be able to set up a reasonably secure Web server using Windows NT with less effort than using Unix.

Security isn't the only issue to consider, however, when choosing between Unix and Windows NT. Windows NT-based Web server products are far easier to install and configure than Unix-based ones. Depending on the server you choose, you could be up and running in minutes using Windows NT. And Windows NT's graphical interface opens doors to new HTTP server management and monitoring features like NetPublisher's server monitor tool. This feature is badly needed in Unix-based Web servers.

DECIDING TODAY

If you need to set up a Web server today that provides secure transaction capabilities, you don't have a choice: You'll have to go with Unix. If you can wait a few months, however, these features should become available in the Windows NT environment. □

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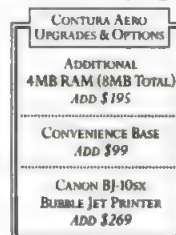
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tems/www/servers/https).

Together with Windows NT 3.5's FTP and Domain Name Service (DNS), the WRK gives you almost everything you need to set up a complete World-Wide Web server. (The one missing thing is an SMTP server to handle e-mail.) The WRK also includes Windows NT performance tools and Portable Operating System Interface for Unix (POSIX), all of which are useful for monitoring your server-growth trends and needs.

SERVING INFORMATION WITH HTTPS

Like the other EMWAC servers and WRK utilities, HTTPS, Version 0.94, is copied to your hard disk by an easy-to-use graphical setup program. Installation, however, consists of nine manual configuration steps. Fortunately, the instructions are easy to follow.

Once we had the HTTPS applet installed, we ran it from the Windows NT Control Panel to define the root directory where our HTML content resided, enabled logging, and defined the logging directory.

The only problem that we ran into was that the HTTPS applet doesn't automatically create the data directory, which is where HTML content is stored, or logging directories. You have to remember to create both types of directories beforehand.

HTTPS does give you the ability to control directory browsing. Even when browsing is enabled, you can disable it on a per-directory basis by creating a NO-BROWSE file in the directory you want to protect. Although this is not a security feature per se, you can use it to control which directories Web users can view.

After copying the content from an existing Unix Web server to our test system, we were able to access most of it immediately. HTTPS behaves much like traditional Unix-based HTTP daemons, except that it's much easier to set up.

HTTPS conforms to the HTTP 1.0 protocol specification. Though not the latest version available, 1.0 is commonly

used and should provide you with most of the Web server functions you need.

The Common Gateway Interface (CGI) 1.1 scripting standard is supported, but the target script must be an executable Windows NT program with an .EXE extension. This means that some programming is necessary to use scripts. Instead of creating executable programs, you can use an interpreted scripting language, such as Perl. The server manual gives you examples of how to do both.

If you want to include WAIS-searchable

content in your Web pages, the WRK manual thoroughly explains how to use the WAIS toolkit and the HTTP server. Once installed, they're easy to use

and make integrating WAIS-searching capabilities into your Web content simple and hassle-free.

Clickable images are also supported. If you're already familiar with the European Laboratory for Particle Physics (CERN)

	SUITABILITY TO TASK	
	Power	Ease
Microsoft Windows NT Resource Kit		
Setup and configuration	GOOD	GOOD
Server management	GOOD	GOOD
Extensibility	GOOD	FAIR



image-map format, you'll have no problems building clickable images with HTTPS. (We copied clickable images from a CERN server and were able to use them without any modifications.)

WHO'S BEEN ACCESSING MY SERVER?

If you want to track what's been accessed on your server and who's been doing the accessing, you can enable a transaction log. This file is kept open for performance reasons until it's closed to create a new day's log, and you can't look at the current log contents while HTTPS is running.

The log contains a time stamp; the IP address of the server and the client; the HTTP request, including the URL requested; and the version of the HTTP protocol used. This format is referred to as transaction logging, and several Unix HTTP daemons, including the CERN and National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) servers, have the capabilities to create these log files. If you're used to building statistics by top-level Internet domain names, you'll be annoyed by HTTPS's lack of DNS translations of client

IP addresses. We hope this feature will be added in a future release of HTTPS.

Errors and warnings are logged using the Windows NT Application Event Log. Events that indicate problems with HTTPS are flagged as errors; events that indicate problems experienced with or by clients (such as incorrect URL requests) are flagged as warnings.

Besides the ability to restrict directory browsing, HTTPS doesn't really offer any security features. So if you need to build a commercial-grade service, this server may not meet your security needs.

We didn't subject the HTTPS to a serious stress test, but no obvious performance bottlenecks surfaced. The server handled our 1,000-item test list without

any delays or problems.

If you're a Unix HTTP server manager and need or want to migrate to the Windows NT environment or if you want to set up a server with the same power and functionality of most Unix servers but want a product that's both easier to set up and use, using the Internet tools in the Microsoft



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WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO TODAY?

Will Your Business Be Safe?

By Kevin Reichard

When it comes to security on the Internet, remember two things: There's no such thing as absolute security, and there are plenty of clever people out there who consider it great sport to try to skirt any security measure you take. What that means is that the better your security, the greater the challenge to them.

BUILDING FIREWALLS

The most popular method of preventing unauthorized access to your data is to construct what's known as a *firewall* between your data and the Internet. A firewall is software that sits between your data repository and the Internet, filtering the packets that are generated by the Internet's baseline protocol, TCP/IP, which wasn't built for security.

You can configure a firewall to allow access only from specific hosts and networks, or you can set it up to prevent access from specific hosts. In addition, you can give different levels of access to various hosts; a preferred host may have full access, whereas a secondary host may have access to only certain portions of your host's directory structure. (This is how anonymous FTP happens on larger systems; these users have access to only specific directories.)

ASSURED PIPELINES

For a higher level of security, you can have an *assured pipeline*, which uses more sophisticated methods to prevent access. A firewall looks only at the header of a packet, but an assured pipeline looks at the entire request for data and then determines whether or not the request is valid. Inappropriate requests can be routed away from the Internet, whereas files that meet specific criteria (such as those that contain the word *confidential*) can never be sent over the Internet—it doesn't matter if the request is made by some-

one who is logged on as the system administrator or as a root user. You pay for this kind of security, though. Sidewinder, from Secure Computing Corp. (800-692-5625), carries a minimum price tag of \$30,000.

PRODUCTS TO USE

If you plan on making sensitive data available on the World-Wide Web,

You can set up a firewall to allow access only from specific hosts and networks; you can also set one up to prevent access from specific hosts.

consider one of the many secure Web products currently hitting the market. To one extent or another, you'll be using technology from RSA Data Security, which is used both in Netscape Communications Corp.'s Netsite Commerce Server and Terisa Systems' SecureWeb Toolkits. Although they differ somewhat in the execution, these products work on the same premise; both encrypt data that moves between a Web site and a Web browser.

Terisa Systems accomplishes this through Secure HTTP, which performs the actual encryption and decryption at both ends of a transmission on a specific Web document. The Netsite Commerce Server, a Unix-based server, uses Netscape's Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol (working in conjunction with TCP/IP) to transport sensitive data via secure ports on the server.

In both cases, you're working with specialized Web browsers. Spyglass's

Enhanced Mosaic 2.0 and its many derivatives (SPRY's AIR Mosaic, Verity's Verity Mosaic) support Secure HTTP; Netscape Navigator works with SSL. Because the technology isn't mutually exclusive, you can implement both methods for added security. (Terisa can be reached at info@terisa.com, and Netscape's e-mail address is info@mcom.com.)

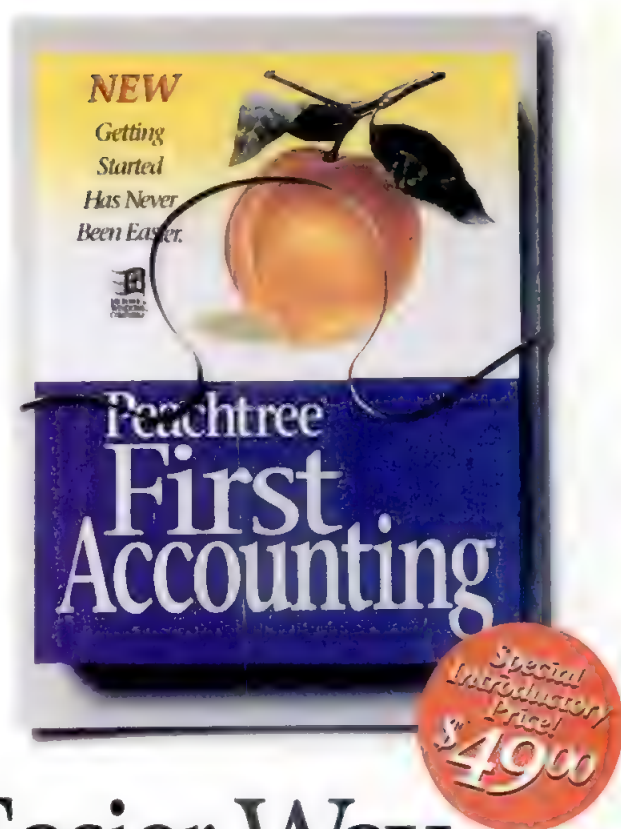
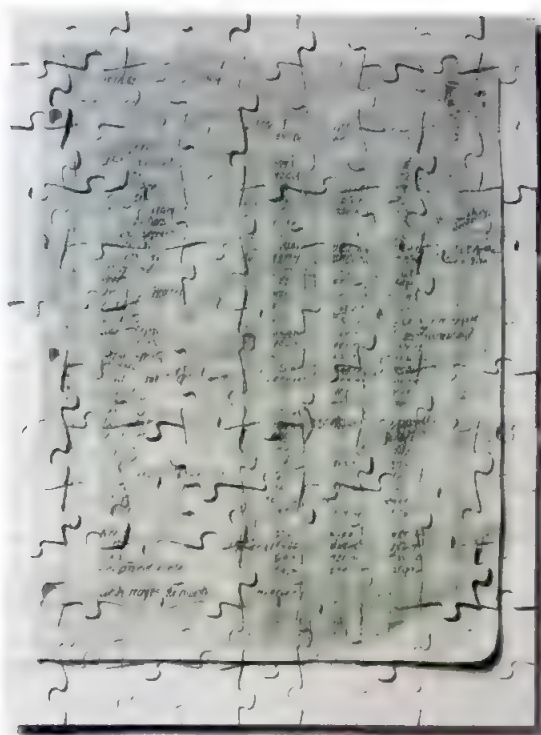
ENCRYPTING E-MAIL

You can protect sensitive e-mail by encrypting either the mail itself or the files attached to it. Perhaps the most famous encryption tool on the Internet is Phil Zimmermann's Pretty Good Privacy (PGP), which uses public-key technology to encrypt messages.

PGP combines public and secret keys from two users to encrypt a file or part of a mail message; you must have the public key of the recipient of an encrypted file for them to decrypt the file. A similar alternative is the MIT Kerberos authentication scheme, which you can use to secure specific messages or to protect the server's protocol level.

Information about PGP can be found at <http://www.mantis.co.uk/pgp/pgp.html>. You can grab PGP 2.62c from net-dist.mit.edu, either via FTP or telnet (pgp262.zip, in the /pub/PGP directory, which also contains documentation and licensing agreements). Be warned that PGP 2.62c can't be used with older versions of PGP.

There is a Usenet newsgroup devoted to PGP, *alt.security.pgp*. It is an essential resource for any administrator dealing with security, as are the newsgroups *comp.risks*, *alt.security*, *alt.security.index*, and *comp.security.announce*. Security FAQs can be found at rtfm.mit.edu in the /pub/usenet-by-group/comp.answers/computer-security directory. □



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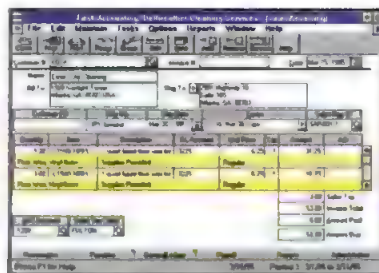
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Circle 457 on reader service card

Ameritech Library Services Inc.

NetPublisher

BY SEAN GONZÁLEZ



If you've been looking for a superior product to manage your World-Wide Web content, Ameritech Library Services' NetPublisher, Version 1.0, is second to none. Experienced Web content managers will find this product confusing at first, but the end results are well worth the effort.

The product consists of a single server

SUITABILITY TO TASK

	NetPublisher	
	Power	Ease
Setup and configuration	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
Server management	8000	8000
Extensibility	EXCELLENT	8000

that supports the HTTP, Z39.50, and Gopher search protocols. Installation is easy.

If you've managed content on the Web before, you'll be surprised by NetPublisher's approach. Think of this program as one that offers access to Gopher-like (hierarchically structured) content through HTTP rather than through a traditional HTTP server. Your content must be structured with the NetPublisher editor before it can be accessed through the Web. This structure will help you organize your content as no other product can, but it takes some getting used to. Fortunately, the NetPublisher editor is packed with impressive content management features that are easy to use and powerful, if not always intuitive. The included tutorials and documentation should help you figure things out quickly.

FROM THE TOP DOWN

Your server content is referred to as a "publication." Starting from the server's

top-level menu item, or root, you organize your content hierarchically off the root. Adding an item to this content tree is as simple as dragging the appropriate content-type icon from a palette to its position within the tree. Supported item types include directory map, file, foreign link, form, menu, and image map.

The menu item is used to build the tree structure, or the graphical view of your content; each menu level is displayed as an HTML page in your Web browser. File items are your content files. Foreign links are equivalent to what are commonly referred to as URLs and are used to establish a link to other services or servers.

Unlike other HTTP servers, where URLs can be used freely within your content, the foreign-link item is a leaf in the tree (a menu item off a Gopher menu), not an object within a file item. You can embed URLs in your HTML file items and refer them to your server content. The process to make them available is not as straightforward as it could be, but Ameritech expects to remedy this in the future.

The form item gathers input from the user. Both Common Gateway Interface (CGI) 1.1 and DLL programs are supported, so information obtained from forms can be processed. Because the program includes a DLL, you can use this without doing any programming. The directory item enables remote access to directories in your server's hard disk.

MAPPING OUT YOUR PAGE

One of NetPublisher's best tools is the image map used to build clickable graphics, in which a click on a region—or hot spot—of the graphic links you to other pages. To create an image map, you just edit the graphic with the image-map tool, graphically select the area you want to make a hot spot, and set preferences.

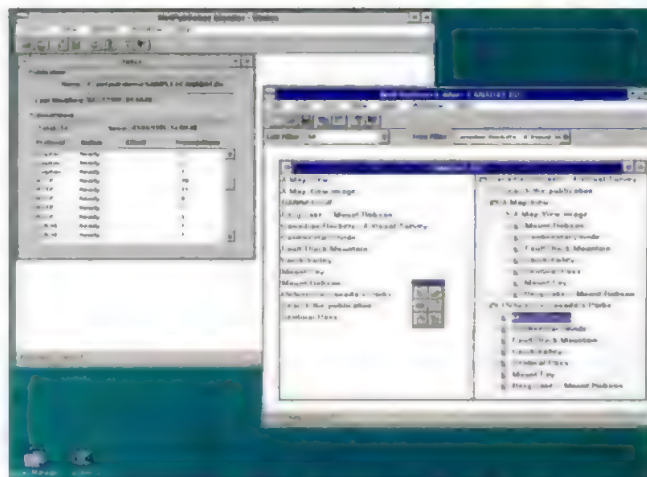
Each item you add to your content has definable preferences that include item and catalog information. The item information

includes the pathname to the actual disk file with your content, check boxes to indicate whether content is searchable, templates for forms, and other items that define the look and feel of your pages. Catalog information defines fields for Z39.50 and Gopher/Jughead searches.

With NetPublisher's HTML Template Wizard, you can create individual or default HTML page templates. By answering a few questions, you define the header, body, and footer layout of your pages. Note that in the body section only lists can be included, which is consistent with the hierarchical nature of NetPublisher content. The template automatically includes time stamps, as well as author, contact, and other administrative information to keep you and your clients aware of your content characteristics without requiring you to provide this information manually.

During installation, you determine how many simultaneous Gopher, HTTP, and Z39.50 clients requested will be processed by the server simultaneously. (The default for each is five.) Using the monitor tool, you can start, stop, and monitor your server with a single interface. While the server is running you get real-time statistics on how many connections each of the three server processes has serviced.

The monitor also supports full transaction logging. You can export the logs to ASCII files, which can be used with a spreadsheet program to manipulate the data to meet your needs. Remote client addresses are stored in IP format in the log file. The program doesn't automatically create new log files and close old ones, so



NetPublisher is a suite of World-Wide Web server tools that includes a monitor (left) and an editor (right) in which you must structure data.

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you'll have to do this as needed.

Although user authentication isn't supported, you can restrict access to your server using IP-based authentication. No other security features are supported.

We did find a few minor problems, the biggest being performance. Using the drag-and-drop capabilities of NetPublisher's editor, we added 1,000 file items from the Microsoft Windows File Manager to our publication and then retrieved the item list from a Web browser. Serving the same

amount of information using a traditional HTTP server took less than 10 seconds, but it took NetPublisher a minute to process the item list before transmitting it to our Web browser. The time it took to send the item-list data was comparable with the time taken by other HTTP servers.

NetPublisher's image-map tool, consistent use of drag-and-drop, ability to add Jughead searching, use of form templates, and HTML Template Wizard make it an outstanding Web content management

tool. But its restrictive, hierarchical content layout limits its use to information that can be organized in that manner.

► **NetPublisher, Version 1.0.** List price: \$16,000 (library version); \$8,000 (commercial version with HTTP and Gopher protocols only). Ameritech Library Services Inc., Academic Division, 1007 Church St., Evanston, IL 60201; 800-556-6847, 708-866-1726; fax, 708-866-0178; e-mail, info@notis.com.

Circle 458 on reader service card

■ Three Routes to a Web Presence

By Jill H. Ellsworth

Right behind the thousands of businesses already on the Internet are many thousands more dying to get on-line. While some are merely curious about cyberspace, others are committing major hardware, software, and personnel resources to establish a substantial presence on the Internet.

If you are interested in being wired for business, there are several approaches to getting on-line. Each can be tailored to the level of your interest and resources.

ROLL YOUR OWN

A low-budget, entry-level strategy involves creating your own World-Wide Web pages and posting them on the Web, in "space" acquired from a commercial access provider. You can learn the basics of writing Web pages (which are actually HTML documents). And with the advent of easy-to-use HTML document-creation tools, such as HoTMetaL Pro, Version 1.0, from SoftQuad (416-239-4801), and HTML-Assistant Pro, Version 1.5, from Brooklyn North Software Works (902-835-2600), Web pages are easy to put together. (For more information, see "HTML: Nothing but Net," February 7, 1995; information is also available on the Internet at <http://info.cern.ch/hypertext/WWW/MarkUp/MarkUp.html>.)

Once your Web pages are up on the Internet, any and all Web surfers will be able to access your Web offerings. Such basic installations usually don't allow on-line customer-response

forms, but people can respond via e-mail, fax, or phone.

Keep in mind that this approach requires a substantial time commitment. In addition, remember that the quality and look will depend entirely on *your* resources and talent for preparing HTML documents.

*Simple, do-it-yourself
World-Wide Web pages
can be posted for
as little as
\$20 to \$40 per month.*

ORDERING OUT

For many businesses, working with a commercial Web services provider is a good choice. Many providers will assist with all facets of design, marketing, and maintenance, and most let you offer on-line order forms. Increasingly, providers are offering technology for secure transactions as well.

Retailers may be interested in cybermalls, which are virtual storefronts that are maintained by some providers. Cybermalls usually have a common entry page and a uniform look and feel. Setting up at such a site is easy, and the cybermall's ability to attract customers can be valuable. You may not, however, have as much latitude to customize your site as you might like.

Alternatively, some businesses create their own pages—often with the assistance of a consultant or ad/marketing agency—then lease commercial Web space. This lets businesses maintain creative control while they leave technical details to technicians.

IN-HOUSE CATERING

Businesses with the resources to hire or train the necessary personnel can bring the whole Internet operation in-house. They can install a Web server on their own systems, set up an Internet node, and create their own multimedia documents from scratch.

If businesses can afford it, this method provides the best control over access, design, and content. This option, however, is only cost-effective for a large business that has the Web experts or is willing to get them.

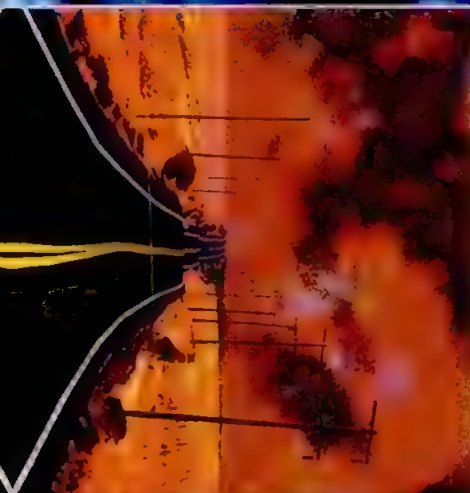
PAYING THE BILL

Costs are in flux in all these categories. For the simple do-it-yourself method, you can find sites in the \$20-to-\$40-per-month range. Web service providers usually offer an à-la-carte selection of services, with first-time setup charges ranging from \$100 to \$1,000 or more, and monthly charges that run anywhere from \$25 to \$10,000. The cost of a full in-house operation will reflect the number of people staffing the project.

Whichever route you pick, get on-line soon and start gaining experience. An Internet presence might just be the ticket to your success. □



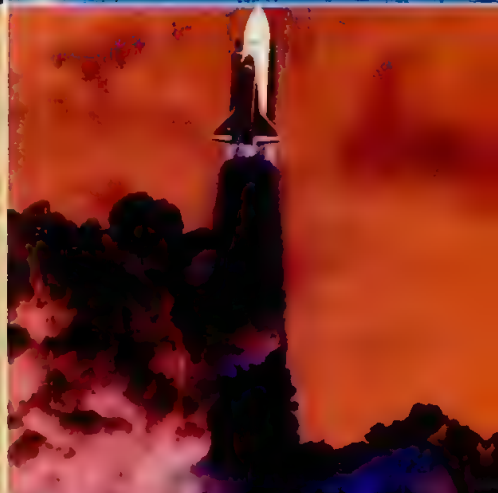
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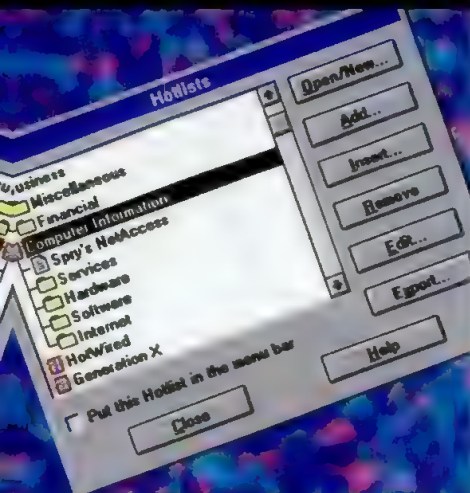
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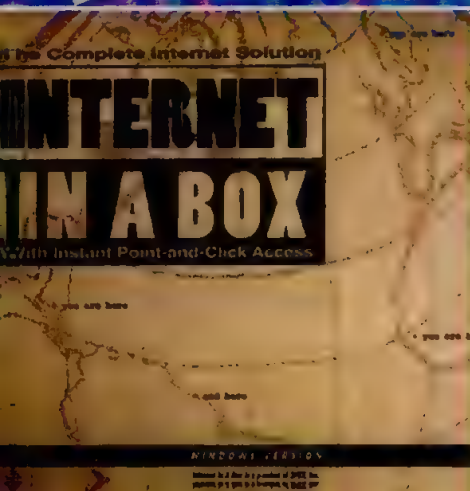
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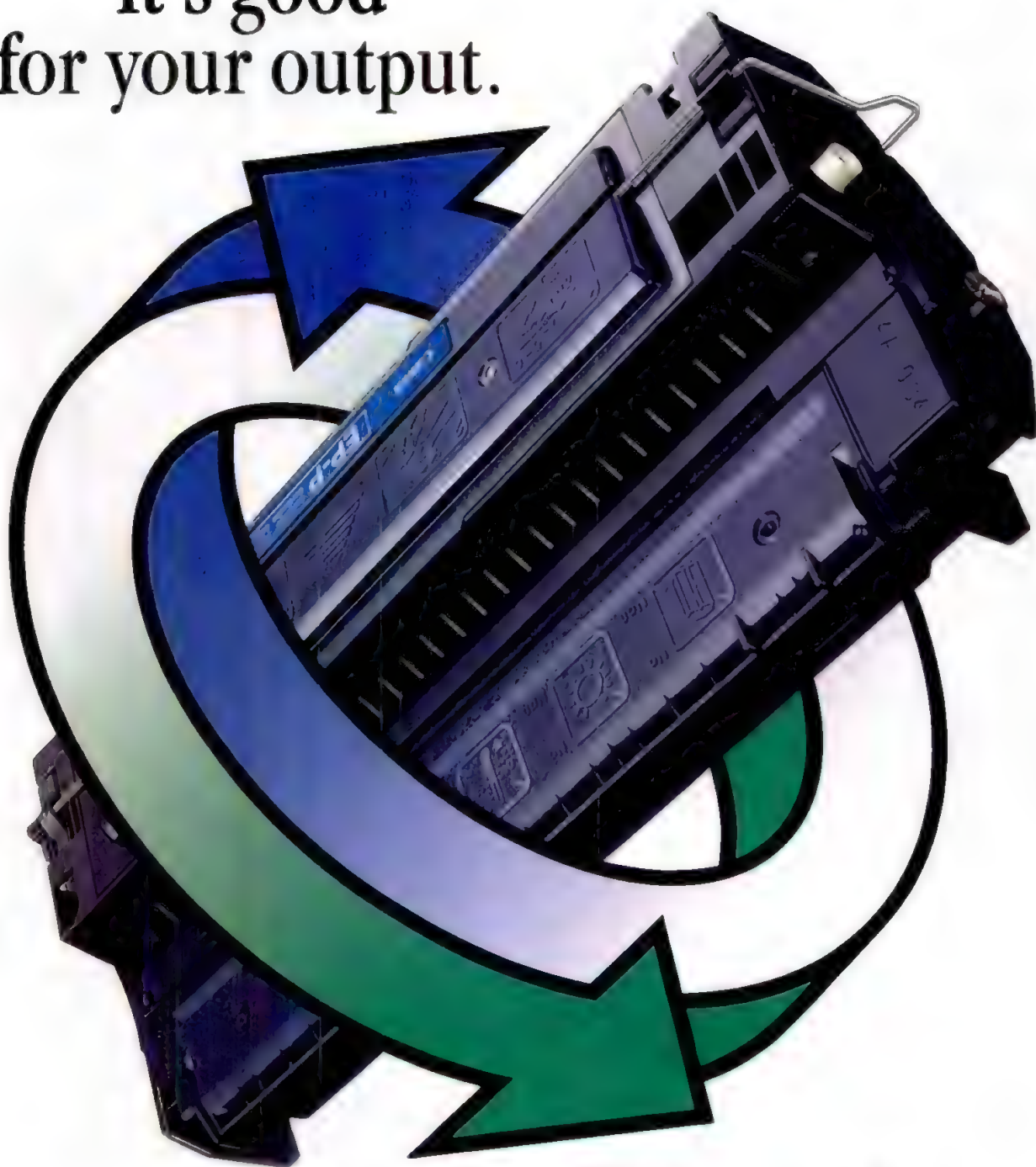
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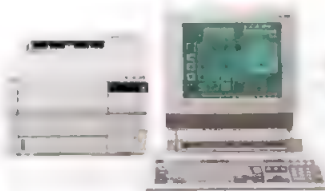
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Lotus Ties Notes to the Internet

By Ben Gottesman and
Amarendra Singh

Lotus Notes has emerged over the past several years as a leading tool for disseminating information within an organization, no matter how widespread the work force. Via public Notes servers such as the forthcoming AT&T Network Notes, CompuServe, and WorldCom, Notes databases could reach an even wider audience. Now Lotus is building a tool to distribute documents in those databases to the widest computer-connected audience of all: Internet users.

Lotus is creating a suite of products under the name "InterNotes" that should vastly improve the interoperability between Notes and the Internet. The first two components to appear are the \$2,500 InterNotes News, which lets users participate in Usenet newsgroups from their Notes desktops, and the subject of this preview, the \$7,500 InterNotes Web Publisher, Version 1.0—a tool that can automatically convert Notes databases (or portions thereof) into HTML documents for publication on the World-Wide Web.

EASY CONVERTS

The InterNotes Web Publisher consists of two primary parts: an administration database that controls which Notes databases will be converted to HTML and a Notes server add-in that actually performs the conversions. Lotus will also provide several sample applications to help customers get started. The first release of the Web Publisher, due sometime in the second quarter, will only run on Microsoft Windows NT-based Notes servers.

Since the vast majority of today's Notes servers are OS/2-based, this may require early adopters to venture into unfamiliar territory. Lotus says it plans to release an OS/2 InterNotes Web Publisher after the release of the Windows NT product.

Notes presents data in Forms and Views. Forms show an individual database record, whereas Views provide a summary of some or all of the database. Like a Web document, a Notes Form can contain rich text and graphics. This similarity in data presentation is what makes Notes a suitable platform for Web publishing.

Most Notes users are familiar with a feature called DocLinks, which lets Notes users click on an icon to jump to another document within the same or a different database. The Web Publisher will automatically convert this icon and the link to an HTML hypertext link. In addition, users will be able to extend document presentation beyond Notes' native capabilities by embedding HTML commands—or entire HTML documents—within a Notes document. These commands can include links to documents on any

Web server, not just those created by the Web Publisher. The program even does a nice job of converting Notes tables into HTML tables.

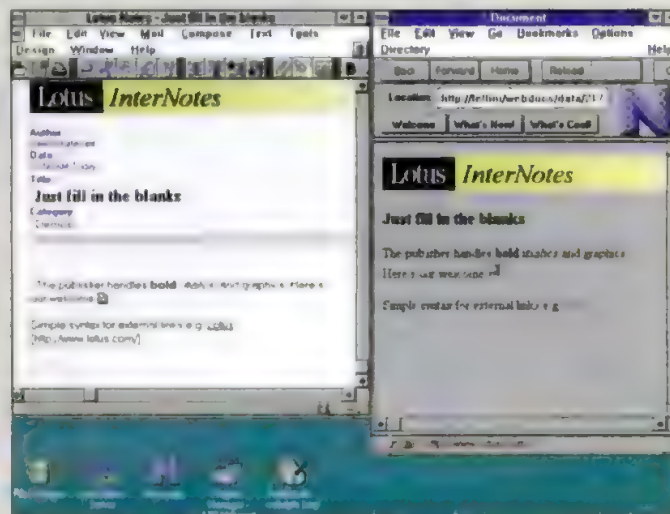
TOUGH CONVERTS

The first time a Notes database is run through the Web Publisher, all designated documents and views are converted into HTML. Thereafter, only new information and modifications are added. The conversion is extremely fast. The conversion of Notes Views isn't as smooth, however. Views are presented in a monospaced font, such as Courier. One of Notes' strengths is that users can wade quickly through vast amounts of data using categorized views and full-text indexing, but this first release of the InterNotes Web Publisher doesn't provide any searching capabilities or forms. To present data efficiently, organizations will have to create many views that show only a subset of the data. Another limitation of the Web Publisher is that all data is read-only. Lotus expects to address these shortcomings by the end of the year.

Given the limitations of the first

version of Lotus's InterNotes Web Publisher, it's likely that the product will be used mostly to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a presence on the Web, including a look at demand and at maintenance costs. But if Lotus comes through on its update plans, the InterNotes Web Publisher should prove an extremely effective tool for creating and maintaining a business presence on the Web.

To see a site that's actually running off the beta version of the InterNotes Web Publisher, go to <http://www.lotus.com>. □



On the left is information as entered into Lotus Notes. On the right is the same page after it has been run through the Web Publisher and converted into HTML.



Serial Port Modem with Windows

WHAT HAPPENS TO WINDOWS DATA WITH AN ORDINARY MODEM.

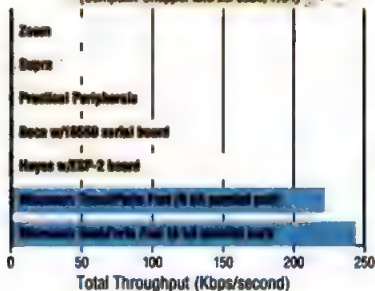
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Parallel Port Modem with Windows

WHAT HAPPENS TO WINDOWS DATA WITH A MICROCOM MODEM.

Modem Performance in Windows
(Computer Shopper and ZD Labs, 7/94)



The problem with ordinary modems is the serial port bottleneck. At high speeds, Windows data slams on the brakes as it tries to squeeze through your modem's **serial port—which can only transfer data one bit at a time**. Results: slower performance, frequent loss of data and higher phone charges.

A serial port accelerator card can help, but it can add \$100 to the price and is difficult to install.

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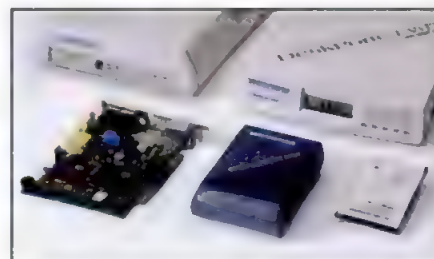
priced modems, including a high-speed PCMCIA card for notebook users.

As the ZD Labs chart clearly shows, this solution is a winner. In fact, the DeskPorte FAST 28.8 was "Experts' Pick" in the July '94 issue of *Windows Sources*. Both Microcom modems they tested achieved "...the highest overall throughput of any rival."

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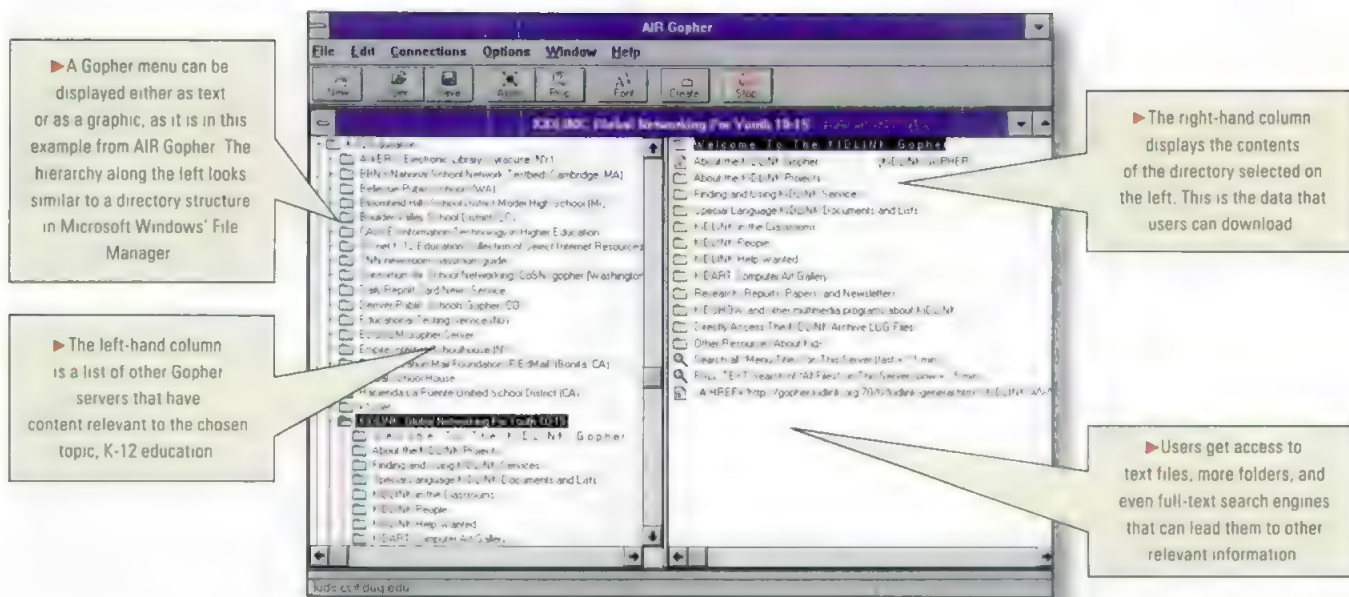
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Letting Customers DIG THROUGH YOUR DATA

By Kevin Reichard

Making your business accessible on the Internet can be a lot more complicated than merely making the physical connections to the Internet and posting a few World-Wide Web pages for public consumption. It's important to learn which Internet organizational tools are available and how you can implement them on your network.

THREE APPROACHES

You can set up an information server using any of the following three technological approaches:

- **FTP (File Transfer Protocol)**, which allows users to log on to your server, either through an assigned account or anonymously, in order to transfer files.
- **Gopher**, a menu-based storage system for files and links to other Internet resources. A Gopher can either be a local client or the server.
- **WAIS (Wide Area Information Service)**, an indexing mechanism for larger databases.

You don't necessarily need all three tools to put your information on the Internet. Still, there's a symbiotic relationship among the three: A WAIS server can be accessed from a Gopher menu or a

World-Wide Web browser such as Mosaic or Netscape Navigator (as long as it has the ability to display forms), while both Gopher and FTP servers can also be accessed from a browser or referenced on a Web page.

FTP: OPENING THE DOOR

Enabling FTP is the easiest way to make large quantities of data available to your customers via the Internet. With FTP, you're allowing a portion of your system's directory structure to be open to the public. Any file—whether it originated on a DOS, Macintosh, or Unix system—can be stored on an FTP server.

Though an FTP server can be set up to allow access only to privileged users, the more popular configuration is to allow "anonymous" FTP, where anyone willing to type their e-mail address as a password can enter the system. Anonymous users have access to only a portion of the file system (typically the contents of a directory named `/pub`), and they have access to only a few commands, used for retrieving files and maneuvering within subdirectories. If you don't want users storing files on your system, you can change the permissions to read-only, leaving the administrator with the sole ability to move files to the FTP directory.

FTP is built into Microsoft Windows



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NT 3.5, so there's no need to acquire additional software to implement it on your network.

GOPHER MENUS

Named after the mascot at the University of Minnesota, where the software was developed, *Gopher* refers to both client and server components.

Gopher is built around text menus in a hierarchical directory-style structure. For the user, there's nothing elaborate or complicated about using Gopher. When connecting to a Gopher server, the Gopher client sees a set of entries that can refer either to files on the server itself or resources elsewhere on the Internet. You don't know, or need to know, that a given entry actually points to a file stored on a server in, say, Finland—much less the mechanism for retrieving the file via FTP. You simply select entries and Gopher does the rest. Links can be to other Gopher servers, to files elsewhere on the Internet, or to a WAIS server.

Setting up a Gopher server is slightly

first conceptualized the Wide Area Information Server, or WAIS, as three elements: a client, a server, and an indexer.

Here's how the pieces work together: First, the indexer takes a list of files you want to index and generates from it seven index files. These indexes include a directory of all words appearing in the database, a list of documents and files that constitute the database, and the "headline" of the documents contained in the database (a short summary for users who search the database). WAIS supports more than 30 file formats; for instance, the indexer knows enough not to index the contents of TIFF or PICT image files.

With the index created, you need to tell the rest of the world about it and your server. You can do this automatically by running WAIS with a register option, which places your index next to the hundreds of WAIS indexes already available on the Internet—items such as a legal index from West Publishing, indexes of the speeches of Presidents Clinton and Bush, and countless academic databases. (As with many things on the Internet, there's still a strong academic flavor to WAIS indexes.) When users search through the centralized directory of servers, they'll be linked to your index automatically.

Today, there are both commercial versions and freeware versions (known as freeWAIS and maintained by the Clearinghouse for Networked Information Discovery and Retrieval). The European Microsoft Windows NT Academic Centre (EMWAC) has ported Unix-based freeWAIS to the Windows NT platform, and we evaluate it here.

The one drawback to running a WAIS server is that it's a very unsecure tool. You'll definitely want to look at firewalls if you're planning on operating

a WAIS server (for more information, see "Will Your Business Be Safe On-Line?").

PC-BASED INFO-SERVER TOOLS

On the server side, the Internet is still primarily a Unix-based world, so it's no surprise that there's a strong link between Gopher and WAIS servers and the Unix operating system. Several firms sell Internet-ready versions of Unix for the PC. These include BSDI's Internet Server 2.0 (\$545; Berkeley Software Design Inc., 800-800-

4273; info@bsd.i.com), Slackware Professional Linux 2.1 (\$64.95; Morse Telecommunications, 800-606-6773; support@morse.net) and SCO Global Access (\$895; The Santa Cruz Operation, 800-726-8649). But there are drawbacks to using any of the PC Unixes: price, lack of documentation, and inflexibility. And you'll need to become fluent in aspects of Unix unrelated to the Internet, such as network configurations, account maintenance, and general configuration.

If setting up a UNIX server is too daunting a task, you might want to check out the Windows NT-based Internet products coming to market.

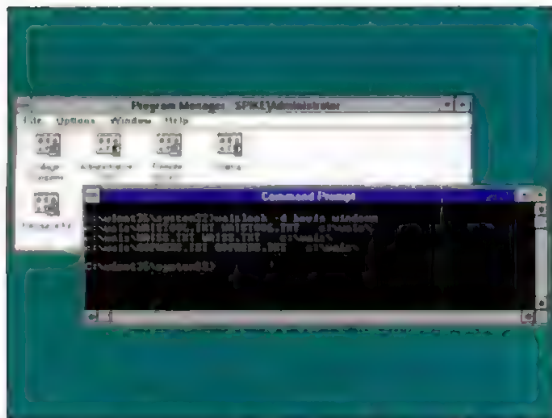
THE TOOLS TO USE

The WAIS and Gopher tools that ship with the Microsoft Windows NT Resource Kit and the Digital Road Map for Windows NT were developed at EMWAC and are based on stable (and free) WAIS tools available for other operating systems. Both Digital Equipment Corp. and Microsoft are financial backers of EMWAC.

With this background, it's no surprise that both the WAIS tools and the Gopher server created by EMWAC are workmanlike, attractive alternatives to their Unix and MVS counterparts. Three distributions (Gopher 0.91, WAIS Server 0.3, and WAIS Toolkit 0.6) comprise several elements and tools, including documentation.

Like their Unix counterparts, the EMWAC tools are broken down by task:

Since it's a very unsecure tool, you'll definitely want to look at firewalls if you operate a WAIS server.



The indexing and checking tools in the EMWAC WAIS tools are controlled from a DOS command prompt under Windows NT. Here, WAISLOOK is used to check which indexed files contain the string windows.

more complicated: The links that users take for granted must be created manually by an administrator. When a link dies or moves, the server must be changed manually to reflect it. And the syntax used for setting up Gopher servers is on the obtuse side.

WAIS: THE BIG INDEX

Brewster Kahle, then at supercomputer-manufacturer Thinking Machines Corp.,

■ What's Next for Servers?

By Rick Ayre and Amarendra Singh
New World-Wide Web (or HTTP) server packages are appearing at a dizzying pace, and some are coming from companies we've never heard of, or ones not usually associated with this type of software.

Big client/server database companies such as Oracle and Sybase have already announced Web-server products. Many smaller companies that provide Internet connectivity software, such as SPRY and NetManage, have indicated that they intend to compete as well. Then there are companies like Quarterdeck that are trying to change their core business as the software market transforms. New products are also on the way from Architext, BRS, Oracle, PLS.Thunderstone, and Verity (see "Help! I'm Drowning in Data!," Michael J. Miller's column in this issue).

But there's one big stumbling block for all these developers: secure transaction processing. The ability to support secure transactions is imperative if the Internet is ever to be a serious business tool. Today, businesses use these Internet tools mainly for marketing, not selling. In most cases, if you want to buy a product, you must contact vendors by phone or private e-mail, primarily because of the security issue.

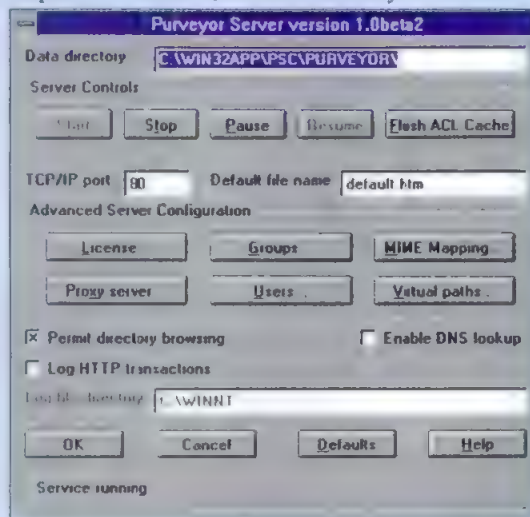
Vendors aren't letting this hold up progress, however. The race to develop new products is clearly on.

QUARTERDECK

With the DOS-memory-utility market diminishing, Quarterdeck has been working to build a full set of Internet publishing tools, primarily now for use on the World-Wide Web: WebAuthor, Quarterdeck Mosaic

(the working name for their Web browser), Quarterdeck Web Server for Windows, and Quarterdeck Internet Took Kit.

The products will run on Windows 3.x and support Common Gateway Interface (CGI) scripts for data from forms. Quarterdeck has yet to deter-



Process Software's Purveyor is one of several World-Wide Web server products based on EMWAC code.

mine if its products will support verification, but it will provide HTTPS security. The Web/Author, at \$149.95, should be available by the time you read this. Quarterdeck's other three products should be available by mid-1995. To learn more, contact Quarterdeck at <http://www.qdeck.com>.

PROCESS SOFTWARE

Purveyor, Version 1.0, will be Process Software's World-Wide Web server for Windows NT, which is also destined for Win32 platforms such as Windows 95. Version 1.0 will run on Intel platforms and on Digital's Alpha RISC processors if they are running Windows NT 3.5 and above.

Purveyor is built on Microsoft's EMWAC-server code. But it extends the functionality of EMWAC by providing the tools to restrict access to individual HTML pages based on

IP address, user name, or both. Transaction logging information—time, date, HTML page, and IP address of the requester—will be implemented, as will Basic Authentication security. Proxy server support will be provided for HTTP, FTP, and Gopher protocols. Pricing for Purveyor will be \$1,995 per license. It should be available by the time you read this. For more information, you can contact Process Software at <http://www.process.com>.

FOLIO

Folio Corp., best known for its Folio Views document-management products, has also developed a Web-based publishing tool called Folio Infobase Web Server (\$6,995). Like Purveyor, it's being built on top of EMWAC's server. And like Lotus's InterNotes, it's using an existing distribution mechanism (in this case, Folio Views) that extends it to the Internet by replicating on to the Internet. Folio Infobase Web Server should be available in the second quarter. Folio's Web page is not available to the public.

NETSCAPE

Two of the hot HTTP servers in the Unix market now on their way to Windows NT are Netscape Communications' Netsite Communications Server and Netsite Commerce Server. Netsite Communications Server uses HTTP/1.0 access authorization but doesn't support data encryption or server certification. Netsite Commerce Server includes security through implementation of public-key cryptographic technology from RSA Data Security, which provides data encryption and server authentication.

The Unix versions of Netsite Communications Server are priced at \$1,495; the Commerce Server is \$5,000. The Windows NT products will likely be in the same price range. Contact Netscape at <http://www.netscape.com>. □

WAISINDEX.EXE is used to create the actual WAIS index; WAISTOOL.EXE is used to check the index from a Windows NT DOS command prompt; WAIS.EXE is the WAIS server, installed as a Windows NT service; and WAIS-SERV.EXE is a Z39.50 protocol handler and search engine.

SETTING IT UP

Creating a WAIS index is simple: You run WAISINDEX on a set of files (preferably stored in their own directory) and seven different WAIS reference files are subsequently created, all of which begin with the name of the index (*data.dic*, *data.doc*, *data.src*, and so on). These files actually constitute the WAIS index. To check the WAIS index from within your system, you use WAISTOOL to search for a string. All of this is done from a DOS command prompt.

The WAIS server and Gopher are installed and configured a little differently. But both are installed as Windows NT services and are controlled via applets in the Control Panel.

SINS OF OMISSION

The EMWAC tools are fairly easy to install and configure, even for someone not fully conversant in the ways of the Internet. The problem may be configuration for someone used to working with WAIS

*The EMWAC tools are
fairly easy to configure,
even for someone not
fully conversant in the
ways of the Internet.*

and Gopher tools on a Unix-based system, as there are differences between the EMWAC Internet tools and their Unix counterparts—some major, some minor.

For instance, moving an existing Gopher server to Windows NT may be more problematic than you think. A Unix-based Gopher server relies heavily on hidden files beginning with a dot. Filenames and links to other Gopher servers are both stored in

dot files. A FAT (file allocation table) file system, however, chokes on files beginning with a dot. Although the EMWAC Gopher does have a Unix compatibility mode for precisely these situations, it can't be invoked on a FAT file system. In addition, some central features found in freeWAIS aren't found in the EMWAC WAIS tools. The most glaring omission is any sort of security measure. FreeWAIS, for instance, allows server-access control, which permits access to server files by specified users, as well as per-directory access control for specified users. EMWAC WAIS tools don't have either of these features. Similarly, later versions (2.x) of Gopher on a Unix platform feature an access token, which lets you specify which machines can perform specific actions. Though you should be looking at additional security measures for your Internet setup no matter which platform you're on, the total lack of security in EMWAC WAIS and Gopher is troubling.

All the utilities are available on-line from ftp.emwac.rf.ac.uk, in the *pub/gophers*, *pub/waiss*, and *pub/waistool* directories.



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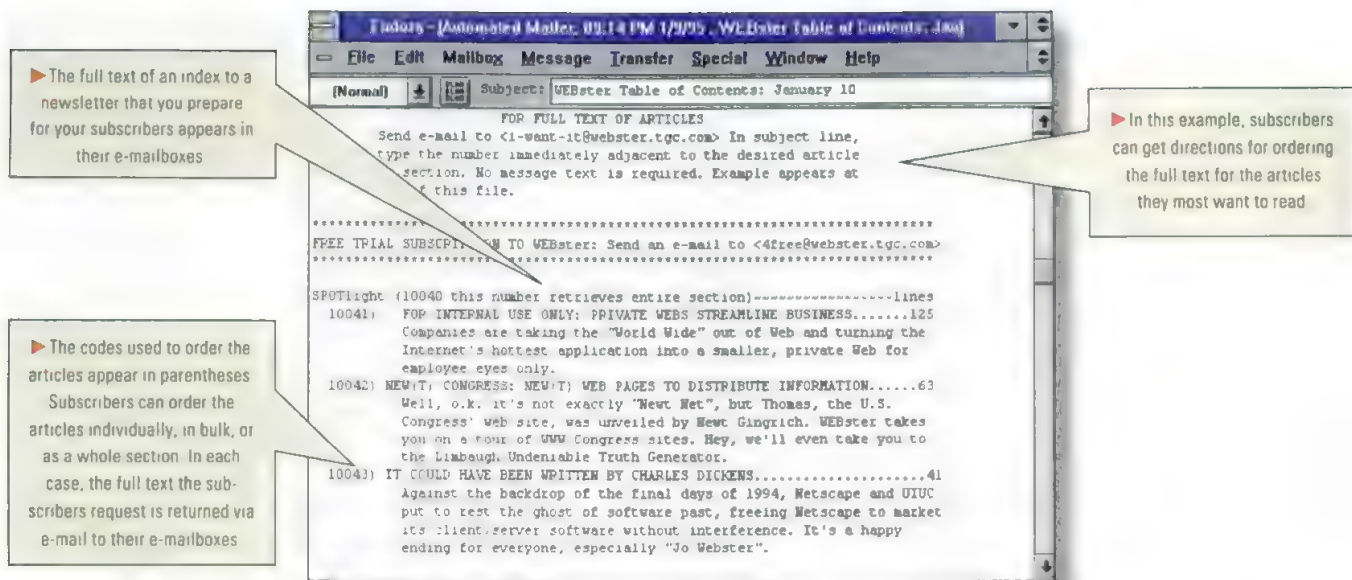
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LEVERAGING E-MAIL

By Kevin Reichard

If there's one common denominator for users of the Internet and on-line services, it's text-based e-mail: Everybody's got it; everybody *uses* it. Given this universality, there are a number of ways your business can take advantage of e-mail to send information to potential clients and customers. In fact, you can communicate with those customers via e-mail even if their only access to mail comes through a commercial service such as America On-line or a local bulletin board system (BBS).

Essentially, you use e-mail to send information from a server you've connected to the Internet. This information may be

an ongoing, specialized discussion of some sort, a regular mailing, a text file, or even software. In this story, we give some examples of the different ways e-mail is being used to spread news and information to the most targeted audience of all: people who contact you directly.

MAILING LISTS

Much of e-mail's power is centered around mailing lists and the software that generates them. In this context, a *mailing list* is both active and passive—not only a list of mail recipients in the sense we normally think of it, but also, the automatic distribution of mail items to the hundreds or even thousands of "subscribers" on

such a list. Listserv or Majordomo software running on Unix or MVS platforms handles these mailings, automatically placing subscription requests into a database and generating periodic mailings—monthly, weekly, daily, or even hourly. Currently, there are no mailing-list servers that run on DOS, Microsoft Windows, or Microsoft Windows NT platforms.

A mailing list is usually centered around a specific topic, and there are countless examples on-line today, some with commercial bents, others for science and academia, and others strictly for entertainment. The single most popular mailing list, according to several Internet sources, is the David Letterman Top Ten List, with over 27,000 subscribers. There's nothing unique about the Top Ten List; it's syndicated by CBS Radio nationwide and can be found on various other Internet sites. But it is unquestionably a great marketing tool for CBS. All those subscribers have, in effect, asked to be reminded about David Letterman's show on a daily basis, and it takes little or no work for CBS to send them what they want.

HOW SUBSCRIBERS REACH YOU

The exact process subscribers use to get on a mailing list varies, depending on the mechanism used to process the request. For instance, to subscribe to the David Letterman Top Ten List, users can send a

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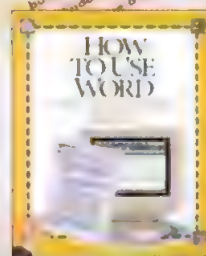
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ext. 259 for more information.

How to Use the Mouse in Windows

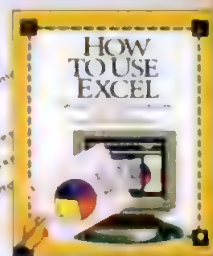
An important part of using a computer is understanding how to use the mouse. The mouse is the most common input device. It is a small, hand-like device with a cord that connects to the computer. It is used to point at and click on objects on the screen. The mouse is a very useful device that can help you work more efficiently. Although it's possible to work without a mouse, it's not too wise. The Windows interface was designed with the mouse in mind. Keyboard alternatives can be awkward, and it's not always easy to find out what they are. Take a few minutes to learn the major mouse moves, and you'll reward yourself with smoother computing.

TIP SHEET

Unless told otherwise use the left mouse button. The other mouse buttons are used to infrequently windows that when they are always told about it.

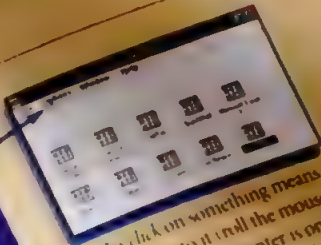


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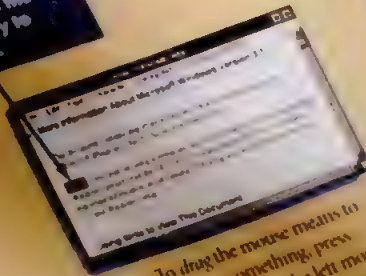
To pull the mouse pointer to the mouse, click on the mouse button. To move the mouse, click on the mouse button.



2

To click on something means to point to it with the mouse so the mouse pointer is on top of it and then press and instantly release the left mouse button. To double click on something means to point to it and then click the left mouse button twice in rapid succession.

Drag across a word to select it. Then press the Delete key to delete it.

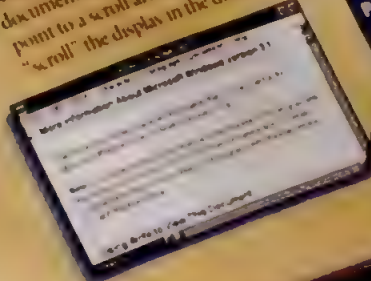


3

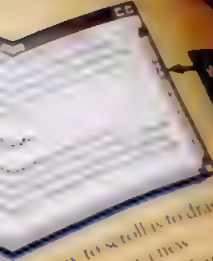
To drag the mouse means to point to something, press and hold down the left mouse button, roll the mouse, and then release the mouse button. For example, you can "select" a block of text for deletion by dragging from one end of the block to the other.

4

Scrolling is one of the most common mouse actions. When a document window cannot accommodate all its contents at once, point to a scroll arrow and hold down the left mouse button to "scroll" the display in the direction of the arrow.



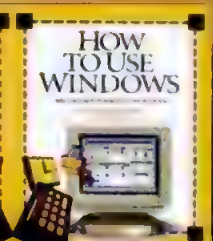
Point here and hold down the left mouse button to scroll down through the document.



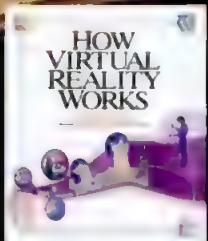
We can scroll the way through the document. Drag the scroll bar button along the scroll bar to see what part of the contents you are viewing.

Another way to scroll is to drag the scroll bar button to see what part of the contents you are viewing.

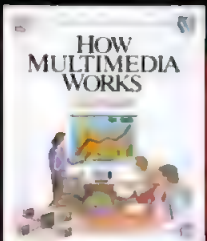
There is a book for every major software package, with new titles publishing every month.



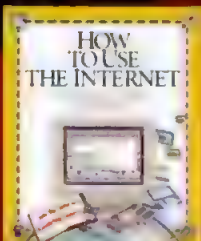
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request either to the originating Listserv server (listserv@list-serv.clark.net) or to a Listserv server that sends along subscription requests to other Listserv servers (such as listserv@listserv.net). Because these lists are text-based, subscribers can use a commercial on-line service such as America Online or MCI Mail to join the mailing list and to receive its publications.

The Listserv software will automatically grab your e-mail address from the incoming subscription request. If you're using a mail program that adds signature files, you don't include your signature file in this instance, as the Listserv software will strip it out. It's important to note that this proce-

dures works for the Listserv software only; other types of mail-server software, such as Majordomo, work a little differently.

If the idea of putting mailing lists to work in your business intrigues you, you should be aware that you don't have to set up your own Unix server to run a mailing list. You can contract with a service provider to set up and maintain the list for you, or simply to give you server space if you have the in-house talent to maintain the list yourself.

E-ZINES

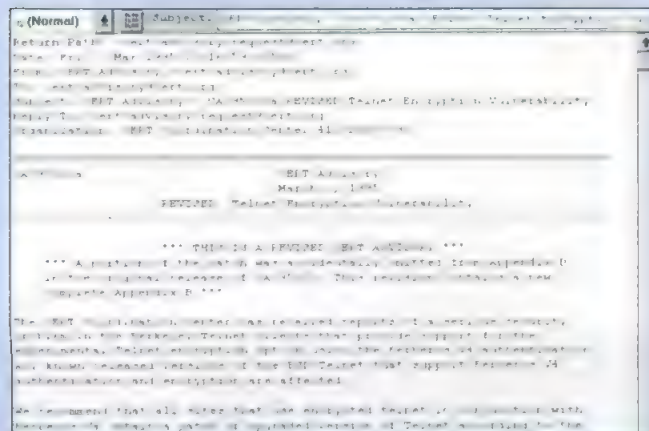
The convenience of mailing lists has also spawned a new world of electronic mag-

azines, or "e-zines." These are the ultimate in do-it-yourself publishing, requiring little more than an e-mail account and some gumption. Though you may not need an entire magazine to market your business on-line, the format is an interesting and potentially useful one, regardless of the actual size of the publication. To see a good example of an e-zine, check out *Voices from the Net*, an intelligent attempt to make sense of the fast-growing "Net"—in broader terms, the Internet, on-line services, and BBSs. (Send subscription requests to voices-request@andy.bgsu.edu; in the subject field, enter *voices from the net*; in

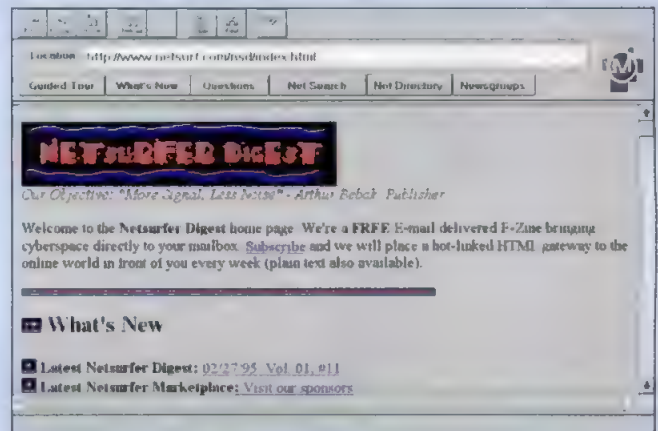
Successful E-Mail Strategies

By Kevin Reichard

As these six screens show, the e-mail your customers receive from you over the Internet isn't always pretty. If good looks matter more to you, investigate the World-Wide Web as a method of distributing information. What e-mail and mailing lists can do is provide your business with a way to keep your customers updated about and interested in your products and services, and to respond to their individual questions as quickly as you can. It's a very cost-effective tool: Your customers come to you without your having to look for them.



■ If you're worried about security and your Internet installation, you'll want to subscribe to the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) Advisory, which details security lapses on the Internet and the measures you can take to prevent damage at your site. This mailing list proves that even if you have very technical information you want to distribute, you can find an audience for it. To subscribe, send e-mail to cert-advisory-request@cert.org, with "request" as the subject line



■ The Netsurfer Digest has more news about the Internet than anyone could ever want to know. This e-zine's distribution is unique: It's mailed either as straight text or as a HTML document, as HTML, it can be loaded into your browser, and its links to other World-Wide Web pages are activated. That's one way to get around the text-only restriction of e-mail (see above). Subscribers pay nothing, but they must be willing to receive one message containing marketing materials each week. Send e-mail to nsdigest-request@netsurf.com. To subscribe to the text version, place "subscribe nsdigest-text" in the first line of the message; to subscribe to the HTML version, put "subscribe nsdigest-html" in the first line of the message.

the body of the message, enter *subscribe*.)

Not all e-zines are distributed via e-mail, of course. More graphically ambitious offerings such as Global Network Navigator or HotWired require subscribers to log onto World-Wide Web home pages. But even HotWired maintains a mailing list that updates subscribers weekly. It's one example of a business that's using a mix of on-line strategies to reach out to customers.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Discussion lists are similar in some ways to mailing lists, but while mailing lists

are sent to subscribers in one batch, discussion lists forward messages one at a time.

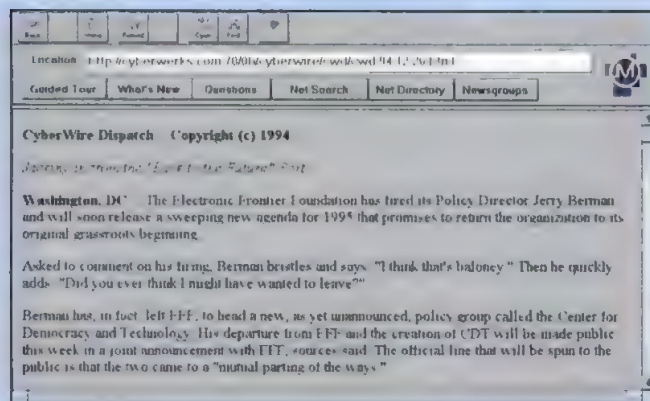
How can a discussion list help a business? On one level, just by being there: IBM, for example, gains a fairly clear marketing advantage merely by maintaining a forum that serves the needs of OS/2 devotees. A subscription to the OS/2 Users Mailing List at listserv@vm1.mcgill.ca yields 10 to 40 messages a day, all concerning OS/2. Subscribers can respond to the person making the original post or send a response back to the full group. IBM doesn't necessarily have to do a thing, yet they're clearly

getting marketing mileage out of all the e-mail traffic.

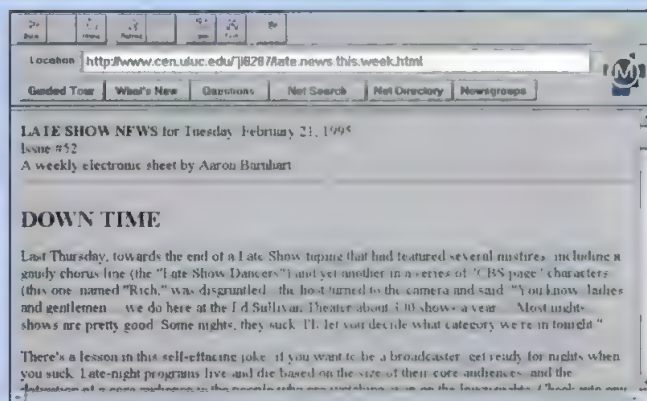
INFORMATION, PLEASE

One of the most valuable parts of a typical Usenet newsgroup is its Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) compilation.

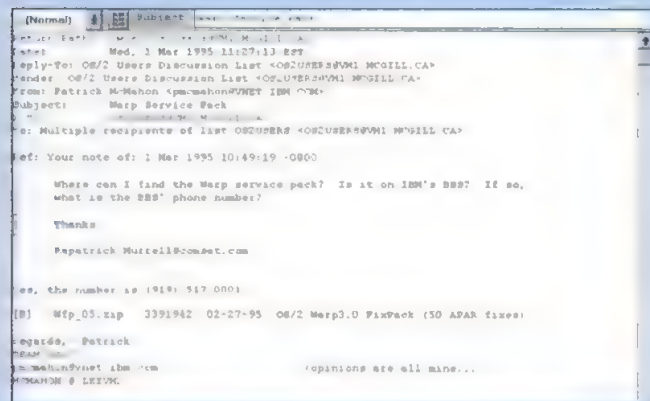
Businesses can use the FAQ tactic to respond immediately to individual questions sent via e-mail by potential customers. If you prepare canned answers to the questions your business gets most frequently, any administrative assistant can instantly respond to a query by sending a FAQ, and your business earns a reputation for being highly responsive. □



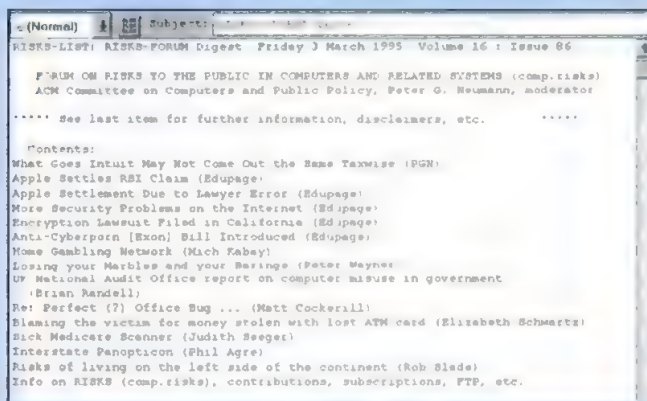
■ Brock Meeks' insightful CyberWire Dispatch is essential reading for anyone interested in the development of the Internet, both in a cultural sense and in a business sense. Meeks started this list with virtually no help and no backing. If you have information people want, they will find you (send a subscription request to majordomo@cyberwerks.com, with "subscribe cwd-l" as the first line).



■ Aaron Barnhart chronicles the late-night television scene with the weekly Late Show News, offering commentary on the likes of David Letterman, Jay Leno, Tom Snyder, and more. It's fun for fans, and it's essentially free marketing for the shows. To subscribe, send e-mail to listserv@echonyc.com with "SUBSCRIBE LATE-SHOW-NEWS Your Name" as the body of the message.



■ IBM OS/2 users can exchange information via the OS/2 Users Mailing List. Postings are sent directly to every subscriber. This list is a good example of how e-mail can be used to help keep any kind of special-interest group active and informed. To subscribe, send e-mail to listserv@mcgill1.bitnet, with "SUBSCRIBE OS2USERS first_name last_name" on the first line of the message.



■ Worried that computers pose a threat to your privacy? Subscribe to the Risks Digest, generated by the ACM Committee on Computers and Public Policy. This is an example of brokered information, a "best-of" mailing list where subscribers get information that's already been culled and condensed. To subscribe, send e-mail to listserv@uga.bitnet, with "subscribe risks" in the body of the message.

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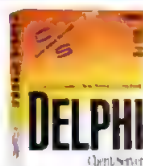
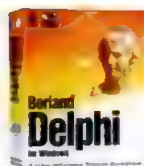
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CIRCLE 287 ON READER SERVICE CARD

User-to-User

BY NEIL J. RUBENKING

Printing Screens in Windows

Here's an easy way to print screens of DOS applications in Microsoft Windows 3.11: Use the Shift-PrtSc key combination. To test this, choose Run from Program Manager's File menu, type EDIT TEST.TXT, and press OK. When the editor opens, note that simply pressing PrtSc will place the contents of the window in the Clipboard. Now press the Shift and PrtSc keys together and you'll find that the print contents are sent to the local printer.

*Lynda Louis
via ZiffNet*

► **PC MAGAZINE:** Just to run down your options, PrtSc alone copies an image of the whole screen to the Clipboard. Alt-PrtSc copies an image of the active window to the Clipboard, whether it's from a Windows application or a windowed DOS box. And as noted here, pressing Shift-PrtSc in a DOS box (windowed or full-screen) bypasses this process and prints the DOS box's screen as text. The Windows manual is a bit misleading; it suggests that if PrtSc doesn't copy the entire screen to the Clipboard, Shift-PrtSc or Alt-PrtSc might. And it says that if Alt-PrtSc doesn't copy an image of the active window, Shift-PrtSc might.

Note that to get the full range of PrtSc behavior, you must be running in

386 Enhanced mode. Windows for Workgroups runs only in 386 Enhanced mode, but if you're running Windows 3.1 in standard mode, you're forced to run DOS programs full-screen and you can't copy their contents to the Clipboard with Alt-PrtSc.

Stopping the Windows 3.1 StartUp Group

The addition of the StartUp group in Windows 3.1's Program Manager was a great enhancement. There's an advantage in using the StartUp group over the LOAD line because of an undocumented (at least as far as I can tell) override. If you want to skip the StartUp group items, simply type WIN and Enter, and then hold down the Shift key (sounds like MS-DOS 6.0, doesn't it?). I wasn't

even aware that this might be an undocumented feature until I discovered that many experienced Windows users didn't seem to be aware of it. Other *PC Magazine* readers may find it useful too.

*Bryan Johnson
via ZiffNet*

► **PC MAGAZINE:** To suppress the loading of items in the Windows 3.1 StartUp group, you hold down a Shift key until you see Program Manager. To suppress the loading of AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS in DOS 6.0, you hold down the Shift key during the boot process until you see the DOS prompt. So yes, there certainly is a parallel!

The LOAD= and RUN= lines are holdovers from earlier versions of Windows. In Windows 3.1, you should use the StartUp group instead, as it has a number of advantages. For one, a program loaded in the StartUp group can have command-line parameters, while a program loaded on the LOAD= or RUN= line cannot. Also, it's a snap to change the contents of the StartUp group by dragging icons in and out of it.

If you regularly need to load two distinct sets of programs at start-up, you can create a second start-up group with a name like Startup2. To use this alternate group, before starting Windows find the line Startup=Startup in the [Settings] section of PROGMAN.INI and change it to Startup=Startup2 (or whatever name you chose for your alternate start-up group).

Microsoft's Windows Resource Kit (WRK) contains a minor error regarding the RUN= line. It says, "To change this entry, add the application to the StartUp group in Program Manager". The text for the LOAD= line is the same, with the added admonition to check off the Run Minimized box. In fact, moving items into and out of the StartUp group has no effect on the LOAD= and RUN= lines!

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Printer Echo Revisited

The September 28, 1993, User-to-User column showed a method of finding DOS's internal printer-echo flag. Though that item was titled "The Final Word on Printer Echo," I hope you'll present PECHO.COM, a simple TSR that is really useful. Using the flag data, the program toggles the Scroll Lock keyboard light in sympathy with the printer-echo flag. Thus, the light is on when printer echo is on, and it's off when printer echo is off. As far as I can tell, the Scroll Lock light is never used, and PECHO overrides the Scroll Lock key's effect on that light.

PECHO checks the printer-echo flag every time a key is hit, appropriately changing the state of the bit in the keyboard flag byte that controls the Scroll Lock light. You can create PECHO.COM using the DEBUG listing shown in Figure 1.

*Ted Mallett
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada*

► **PC MAGAZINE:** Pressing Ctrl-P toggles DOS's printer echo feature; if it's off Ctrl-P turns it on, and vice versa. When printer echo is active, every character sent to DOS's standard output device is echoed to the printer. This includes the commands you type at the DOS prompt plus the output of all but a few DOS commands. Printer echo can be handy for creating a paper trail of your actions to show a support technician, for example. And programming students are often requested to run their programs with printer echo enabled and hand in the resulting printout.

Unfortunately, there's no way to tell whether printer echo is on or off; all you can do is enter a command and see what happens. If the command is echoed to the printer (or DOS displays a "Write fault error" message), printer echo is on; otherwise it's off. If you find the printer echo feature useful in your work, the tiny PECHO utility will provide a handy indicator of its current status.

For those who are interested, the DEBUG script in Figure 1 is thoroughly commented. You can omit the comments, though, if you're typing the listing into your own computer. To create PECHO

```
N PECHO.COM
A
JMP 0144 ;storage for address of int 9
DW 0,0 ;storage for address of Ctrl+P flag
DW 0,0 ;storage for value of Ctrl+P flag
DB 0 ;dummy byte for alignment
DB 0
STI ;open interrupts
PUSHF ;push the...
PUSH AX ;used registers
PUSH BX
PUSH DS
CS:
LDS BX,[0106] ;load Ctrl+P flag address
DS:
MOV AL,[BX] ;get flag value
CS:
MOV [010A],AL ;store it
MOV AX,0040 ;segment for keyboard flag byte...
MOV DS,AX ;... with sector to get ...
MOV BL,[0017] ;keyboard flag for Scroll Lock bit change
CS:
MOV AL,[010A] ;value of Ctrl+P flag
CMP AL,00 ;is it 0? is printer echo off
JZ 0133 ;it is, so jump
OR BL,10 ;prn echo on, so Scroll Lock lamp on
JMP 0136 ;continue
AND BL,EF ;prn echo off, so Scroll Lock lamp off
DS:
MOV [0017],BL ;initiate Scroll Lock lamp state
POP DS ;pop...
POP BX ; ... the used registers
POP AX
POPF
CS:
JMP FAR [0102] ;go to normal interrupt 9 business
;INSTALL
MOV AH,34 ;get InDOS address
INT 21 ;do it
MOV AX,BX ;offset ...
SUB AX,0023 ;... minus 23h for Ctrl+P flag
MOV [0106],AX ;store address
MOV [0108],ES
MOV AX,3509 ;get the current interrupt 9 address
INT 21 ;do it
MOV [0102],BX ;store address of interrupt 9
MOV [0104],ES
MOV DX,010C ;address to start resident program
MOV AX,2509 ;point interrupt 9 to it
INT 21 ;do it
MOV AX,3120 ;function 31h errorlevel 32d
MOV DX,0020 ;reserve 20h pages (200h bytes)
INT 21 ;terminate and stay resident

RCX
071
W
Q
```

Figure 1: PECHO.COM, the TSR generated by this DEBUG script, links the keyboard's Scroll Lock light to the status of DOS's printer echo feature.

.COM from PECHO.SCR, enter this command at the DOS prompt:

```
DEBUG < PECHO.SCR > PECHO.LOG
```

If you find the string ^ Error in the log file, correct the error in the script and process it again. Otherwise, you've created PECHO.COM. If you want to use PECHO without worrying about how it works, you

can download it from PC MagNet.

Here's one small caveat: PECHO is not a sophisticated TSR; it doesn't detect whether another copy of itself already exists in memory. If you load it repeatedly, each copy will use up 528 bytes plus enough memory for a copy of the current set of environment variables. The best way to use PECHO is to load it from your AUTOEXEC.BAT and nowhere else. □



Tutor

BY JEFF PROSISE

It All Adds Up: How Computers Do Arithmetic

We no longer think of computers as machines that simply *compute*, or calculate. But the simple arithmetic tasks—addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division—are essential to any computer's operation. This is true whether you're calculating a spreadsheet, displaying a new font in your word processor, or playing a sound-and-video clip.

If you read this column in our issue of January 10, 1995, you learned how dynamic random access memory (DRAM) works. One DRAM cell, which stores a single bit of information in computer memory, consists of a transistor and a capacitor. The capacitor stores the bit's value; a charge in the capacitor represents a 1, while a lack of charge represents 0. The transistor acts as a miniature switch. When closed, the switch completes a circuit between the capacitor and a conductor known as a bit line, allowing the capacitor's charge to be read or written. Put millions of these tiny cells together and throw in some supporting circuitry, and you have the equivalent of a modern-day DRAM chip or SIMM.

This time around we're going to investigate how a computer does arithmetic—specifically, how it adds two numbers and comes up with a result. We'll start by reviewing the binary numbering system and performing some simple binary addition by hand. Then we'll look at the specialized circuitry that the microprocessor inside your PC uses to add 1s and 0s. Finally,

we'll see how simple circuit blocks are put together to form full-blown adders. Best of all, you won't need an electrical engineering degree to follow along. If you can understand the difference between on and off, you can understand how computers do arithmetic. No kidding!

THINKING IN 1s AND 0s Most everyone knows that digital computers think in 1s and 0s. Using the base-2, or *binary*, numbering system, a computer represents large numbers with strings of 1s and 0s. Here's how a computer would count from 1 to 10 in binary:

```
1
10
11
100
101
110
111
1000
1001
1010
```

Each "place" in a binary number represents a power of 2, just as each place in a decimal number represents a power of 10. The digits in a 3-digit decimal number, for example, specify, from right to left, ones, tens, and hundreds. Similarly, the digits in a 3-digit binary number signify ones, twos, and fours. Hence, the binary number 101 equals $(4 \times 1) + (2 \times 0) + (1 \times 1)$, which equals 5.

You can add binary numbers just as you add decimal numbers: Line them up so the individual digits form columns, add

digits in one column at a time from right to left, and if there's an overflow, carry it to the next column to the left. Consider, for example, how 17 and 18 are added in the decimal numbering system:

```
  1
17
+ 18
==
35
```

First, 7 and 8 are added, producing 15. Since 15 is greater than 10, the 5 in the ones place is written down and the 1 in the tens place (shown shaded here) is carried over to the next column. Adding the two numbers in the leftmost column and the 1 carried from the previous column yields 3, giving us a final result of 35.

Now let's consider how a computer adds together the binary numbers 0111 and 0010:

```
110
0111
+ 0010
====
1001
```

The procedure is exactly the same, but now a 1 is carried when two or more 1s are encountered. Since the binary value 0111 is equal to 7 decimal, 0010 is equal to 2, and 1001 is equal to 9, the computer just calculated that 7 plus 2 equals 9. Simple stuff, really. I remember learning base-2 math back in elementary school and wondering what on earth I was ever going to need it for. Now I know.

LOGIC GATES The previous section reveals in an abstract way how computers add binary numbers, but it says nothing about the circuits involved. The second step in understanding how a computer adds is learning about *logic gates* and *truth tables*. A logic gate is a simple electrical element that takes one or more inputs and generates an output whose value depends on the values of the inputs. A gate's truth table defines what output will result for each combination of inputs. Input and output values are represented by voltages. Typically, 5 Volts represents a 1 and 0 Volts represents a 0. We'll use 0s and 1s rather than voltages for our discussions because they more clearly illus-

THE AND GATE

Input	Output	Input	Output	In	Out
0	0	1	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	1
0	0	1	1	1	0
1	0	1	1	1	1

Figure 1: The AND gate accepts two inputs, each with a value of either 1 or 0, and outputs 1 only if both inputs are equal to 1. The truth table lists the output value for each possible combination of input values.

trate what the computer is doing.

Figure 1 illustrates the AND gate, which is one of the five basic gates used in digital electronics. The AND gate accepts two inputs, each a 1 or a 0, and outputs a 1 if (and only if) the first input *and* the second input are equal to 1. Any other combination of input values produces an

THE FIVE BASIC LOGIC GATES

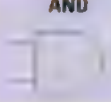
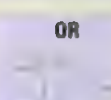
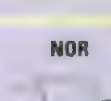
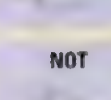
AND		<table><tr><th>In</th><th>Out</th></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	In	Out	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
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In	Out											
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0	1											
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NOR		<table><tr><th>In</th><th>Out</th></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	In	Out	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
In	Out											
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1	0											
1	1											
NOT		<table><tr><th>In</th><th>Out</th></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	In	Out	0	1	1	0				
In	Out											
0	1											
1	0											

Figure 2: Schematic representations of AND, NAND, OR, NOR, and NOT gates, and the corresponding truth tables.

output value of 0. Four different combinations of 0s and 1s can be presented at the two inputs, so the truth table for an AND gate has four entries. If you know the values of the inputs, you can consult the truth table and determine the value of

the output. Schematically, an AND gate is represented by a symbol that resembles an arched doorway turned on its side, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 2 shows all five basic logic gates, the symbols used to represent them in logic diagrams, and their associated truth tables. An OR gate takes two inputs and outputs a 1 if either or

both inputs is equal to 1. In other words, it outputs a 1 if input A *or* input B has a value of 1. NAND and NOR gates are the opposite of ANDs and ORs. Wherever the AND or OR gate produces a 1, the NAND or NOR produces a 0, and vice versa. A NAND gate outputs a 0 if and only if both inputs are equal to 1, while a NOR gate outputs a 0 if either or both inputs are 1. The NOT gate simply inverts its input, changing a 0 to a 1 or a 1 to a 0. Since AND and NAND gates produce exactly the opposite output given the same set of inputs, a NAND gate can be built by combining an AND gate and a NOT gate. (Sometimes the reverse is done: An AND gate is built from a NAND and a NOT.) Similarly, a NOR gate can be put together from an OR gate and a NOT gate, or vice versa.

The basic building block for all logic gates is the transistor, which, like a light switch, performs a simple on/off switching. All transistors have three terminals: a *gate* (not to be confused with *logic gate*), a *source*, and a *drain*. The transistor lets current flow between the source and the drain depending on the voltage supplied to its *gate*. There are several types of transistors, and many different ways to combine them to form logic gates.

Figure 3 shows a common way in which four transistors are combined to form a NAND gate. I've represented the type of transistor known as an *n*-channel MOSFET (metal-oxide semiconductor field-effect transistor) as a switch in a circle and an *p*-channel MOSFET in a square. An *N*-channel MOSFET *closes*—or allows current to pass through it—when a 1 is input to its *gate*, but *opens*—or impedes current flow—when a 0 is input. *P*-channel MOSFETs behave exactly the opposite, closing when a 0 is input and

opening when a 1 is input. Figure 3 also illustrates how presenting 1s at both of the gate's inputs completes a circuit connecting the output line to the ground, producing a 0 at the output—exactly the behavior one would expect from a NAND gate. Note that there are no direct connections between the input and output lines. The input lines simply control the circuit's transistorized switches, which in turn control the current to the output lines.

You can verify that other inputs produce the proper results by diagramming the switch settings for various combina-

THE NAND GATE UP CLOSE

- *N*-channel MOS transistor closes (or lets current flow between the source and drain) when 1 is input to the gate, it opens (off) when 0 is input
- *P*-channel MOS transistor opens (off) when 1 is input to the gate, it closes (on) when 0 is input

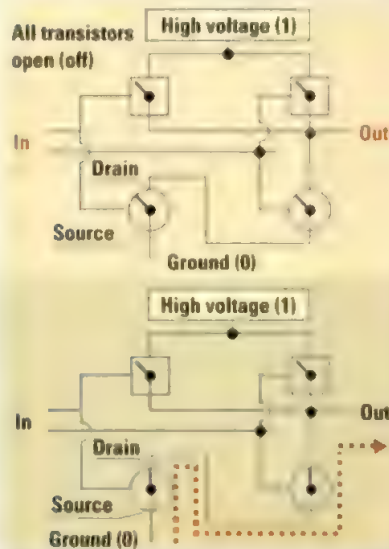
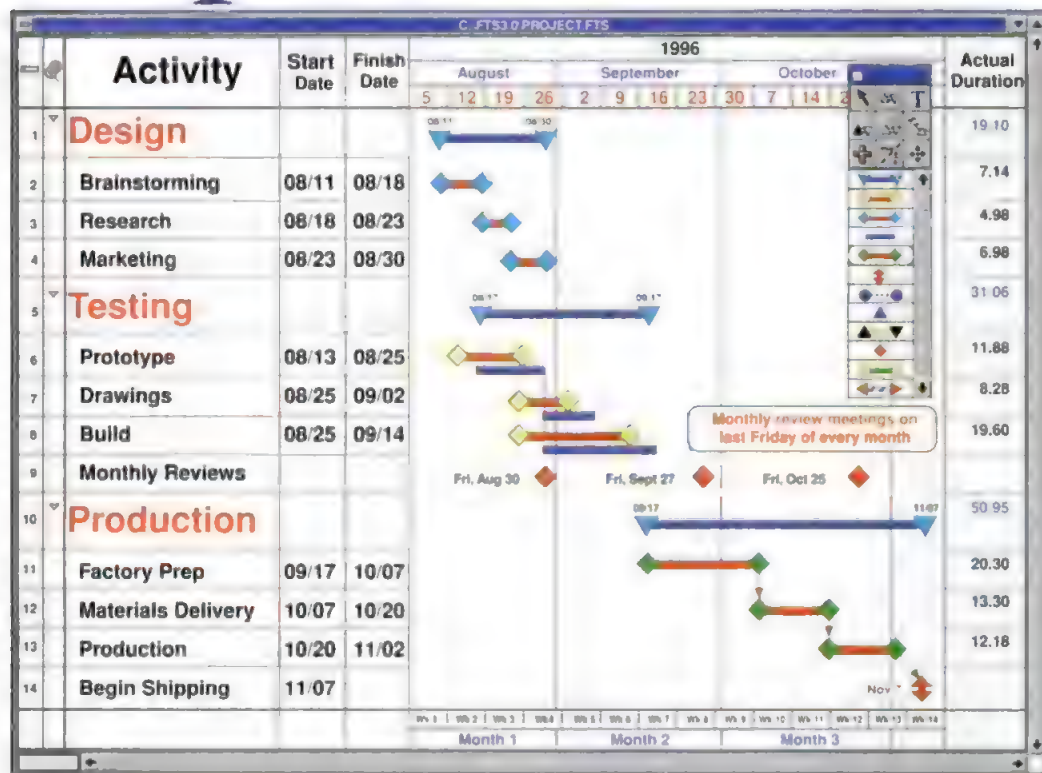


Figure 3: This arrangement of transistors produces a NAND gate. The bottom diagram illustrates how setting both inputs to 1 forms a path from the low voltage source to the output line, producing a 0 at the output.

tions of input values and following the resulting path backward from the output line to the source. In particular, notice that setting either input to 0 closes a square switch and sets the output to high, or 1. Setting both inputs to 0 closes both square switches, once again producing a 1 at the output.

FROM LOGIC GATES TO ADDERS So far you have learned that computers add numbers by adding individual 1s and 0s, and that logic gates allow us to convert

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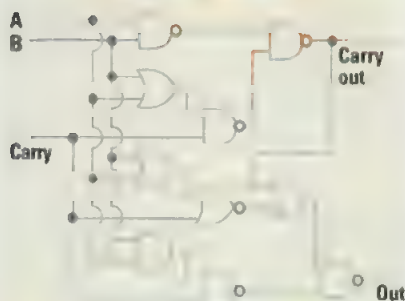
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TOTALLY CONNECTED

A 1-BIT ADDER



A	B	Carry	Out	Carry out
0	0	0	0	0
0	0	1	1	0
0	1	0	1	0
0	1	1	0	1
1	0	0	1	0
1	0	1	0	1
1	1	0	0	1
1	1	1	1	1

Figure 4: This simple 1-bit adder combines logic gates to produce a circuit that adds two binary digits and a carry value generated from a previous addition.

various combinations of 1s and 0s into outputs equaling 1 or 0. If you suspect that somehow these logic gates are combined to produce circuits that add digits representing binary numbers, you're on the right track.

Figure 4 shows how one AND gate, five NAND gates, three OR gates, and one NOR gate can combine to form a circuit known as an *adder*. The circuit takes

ADDING 1 AND 0 WITH CARRY

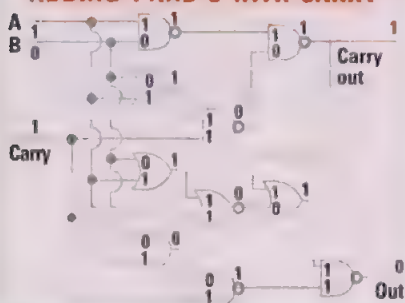


Figure 5: The intermediate and output values produced when a 1 bit is added to a 0 bit with a carry bit equal to 1.

three inputs, which are labeled A, B, and CARRY. A and B are the two digits being added together; CARRY is the value carried from the previous column (0

if no carry). The adder has two outputs: OUT and CARRY OUT. OUT is the output digit, and CARRY OUT indicates whether a carry occurred as a result of adding A, B, and CARRY. Figure 4 also shows the adder's truth table. Setting all three inputs to 0 produces output and carry values equal to 0. Similarly, setting any one of the inputs to 1 produces a 1 output and a 0 carry; setting two inputs to 1 produces a 0 output and a 1 carry, and setting all three inputs to 1 produces a 1 output and a 1 carry. If you think about it for a moment, you will realize that this exactly matches the results you get when you add binary digits.

Don't take the truth table in Figure 4 on faith. If you wish, you can verify its accuracy by sketching the logic elements on a piece of paper and computing what the outputs are for various input values. Figure 5 shows the inputs and outputs of each gate when A and CARRY are 1 and B is 0. Knowing the values input to a particular gate, you can use the truth tables in Figure 2 to determine the gate's output. Propagate these outputs throughout the circuit from beginning to end and you will eventually derive the output values for OUT and CARRY OUT. Do it for all eight possible combinations of input values and you'll generate the truth table entirely on your own.

It's but a small step from the 1-bit adder shown in Figure 4 to a 4-bit adder capable of adding larger numbers. A 4-bit adder is merely four 1-bit adders connected together in series, with the CARRY OUT line from the previous adder connected to CARRY on the next. Figure 6 shows what such an arrangement looks like schematically. In order to avoid clutter, each 1-bit adder is now shown as a block with labeled inputs and outputs. Figure 6 also shows the values of the inputs, outputs, and carries when 0111 is added to 0010. The result—1001, which you can see on the four output

lines—matches the result obtained earlier when we added the same two numbers by hand.

Engineers can build adders capable of handling any number of digits by stringing together enough 1-bit adders. That's basically how it's done in modern microprocessors, although their adding circuits are much more sophisticated than this. Among other things, they incorporate extra logic permitting several bits to be added simultaneously, which greatly reduces the computation time. Circuits perform subtraction in much the same way as addition, with carry lines becoming borrow lines signifying a "borrow" from the next column.

It's all pretty simple when you view it at this level. When it becomes daunting-

A 4-BIT ADDER

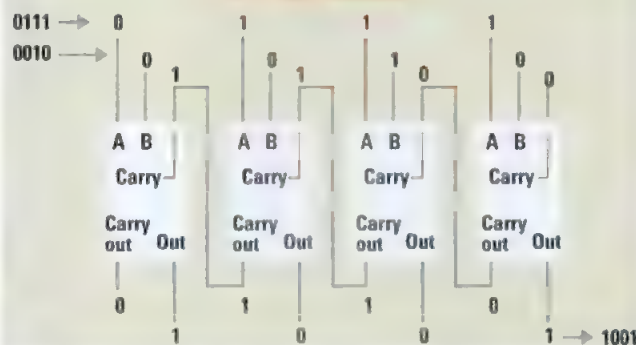


Figure 6: Four 1-bit adders connected in series to form a 4-bit adder. The outputs shown here are the result of adding 0111 and 0010.

ly complex is when you think of the millions upon millions of transistors present in a typical microprocessor chip. It's no wonder the world recently learned that the Pentium has a division bug in its floating-point unit. The real wonder is that human error has not introduced major design flaws in microprocessors before now. Or maybe it has, and we just haven't discovered them yet.

But that, dear reader, is a topic for another day.

FURTHER READING If you want to delve deeper into the topic of transistor logic, try the following books: *How Computers Really Work*, by Milind S. Pandit (Osborne McGraw-Hill, 1993; ISBN: 0-07-881936-9); and *Understanding Solid State Electronics*, Fifth Edition, by Don L. Cannon (SAMS Publishing, 1991; ISBN: 0-672-27338-1). □

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Tech Notes

BY BRIAN PROFFIT

Should Your Computer Go Non-FAT?

In the early days of personal computing, *usability* was not a word associated with operating systems. But in recent years, operating-system enhancements have brought more power to users than ever before, in ways that increasingly shield users from the intricacies of that underlying power. Before you select the Express Installation option that magically moves OS/2 or Microsoft Windows NT onto your computer, though, be warned that what you don't know *can* hurt you. It's worth your time to understand and consider the optional file systems available. In this article we'll look at some of the criteria to consider when selecting a file system. Then, in a future issue, we'll look in more detail at the structure and techniques employed by enhanced file systems.

WHEN FAT WAS GOOD In the early days of personal computing, data was stored on

cassette tapes. Tracking space was a matter of writing down the start and end numbers from the recorder's counter when you wrote a file. Allocating space for a new file was simple: You started the recorder in a spot on the tape where there was enough room for the file or risked writing over and losing the next file on the tape.

With the advent of floppy disks, new techniques were possible. Rather than having to fast forward and rewind to find data, floppy disks could move to a given spot nearly instantly. The file allocation table system (usually abbreviated FAT to indicate both the table itself and the name of the file system that implements it) was the means devised to manage the new possibilities that disks brought. FAT is still the file system you'll get during operating system installation unless you specify otherwise.

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? As the heart of the disk operating system (DOS), FAT has been successfully used by many millions of people over the past 20 years. But remember, FAT was designed in the days when floppy disks were the primary storage device. As fixed disks were created and began growing steadily larger, some of the design decisions made in those early days became less appropriate.

For example, the file allocation table system keeps track of your data using—well, a table. The table is fixed in size, able to track more than 65,000 separate allocation units. Initially, each of those allocation units was 512 bytes. This worked well for years—until disks started growing

large. The table's limits meant, unfortunately, that FAT could handle only disks up to 32MB. If you had a larger disk, you had to divide it into separate partitions. Each partition had its own drive letter and FAT, as though it were physically a different disk.

After DOS 3.0, FAT was enhanced to work with larger disks. It was still restricted to a total of 64K allocation units, but the size of those units could grow to cover the entire disk. This technique is still in use today, but it comes at a high price on large disks.

The problem is that, by definition, the allocation unit is the minimum amount of space that can be allocated. So if you create a batch file of only 50 bytes, that file will still take up the entire allocation unit. If the allocation unit is 512 bytes, a file that takes 513 bytes will use two units, or 1,024 bytes. In other words, some files will use as little as 1 byte of the last allocation unit, while others will fill it totally.

On the average, then, half the size of an allocation unit will be wasted by each file. As you can see in Figure 1, that can grow to a massive amount of space. A 510MB disk easily may have 1,500 files on it. Using FAT, 6MB of space is lost just because of the allocation unit size. This is even worse on the currently popular 850MB drives. You easily can have 2,500 files on such a drive, wasting 20MB of space! On multigigabyte network drives, the waste is astronomical.

This is an area where enhanced file systems give you a clear advantage. Simply using the High Performance File System (HPFS) under OS/2 or Windows NT, or NT's own NT File System (NTFS), you can immediately drop back to 512-byte allocation units regardless of the size of your disk partition. To get an idea of the amount of disk space you can reclaim, run CHKDSK. You'll see a report similar to the following:

```
524,058,624 bytes total disk space
466,944 bytes in 55 hidden files
2,490,368 bytes in 301 directories
391,667,712 bytes in 7,387 user files
129,433,600 bytes available on disk
```

```
8,192 bytes in each allocation unit
63,970 total allocation units on disk
```

Disk Partition Size	Allocation Unit	Average Wasted/File
below approx. 16MB*	4,096	2,048
below approx. 128MB	2,048	1,024
below approx. 256MB	4,096	2,048
below approx. 512MB	8,192	4,096
below approx. 1GB	16,384	8,192
below approx. 2GB	32,768	16,384
HPFS - any size	512	256
NTFS - any size	512	256

Figure 1: This table shows how FAT allocates space on your disk and the average amount of space wasted by each file. Note that while floppy disks are also FAT-based, they always have an allocation unit of 512 bytes (until someone invents floppy disks larger than 32MB).

■ How Disks Become Fragmented

As you add and delete files and information inside those files, the contents of your hard disk changes constantly. Let's look at how this affects your system.

Below, we see a fresh disk with new files on it. Since FAT always adds new files at the end (whenever possible), the files line up neatly . . . at first.

This is an unfragmented disk.

Root	File 1	File 2	File 3	Unused
------	--------	--------	--------	--------

After a while, though, you may no longer need some of these files. Suppose you delete the second file. The next file you save may be exactly the same size, but FAT will save the new file at the end of the list, as shown below.

A deleted file leaves an opening.

Root	File 1	Unused	File 3	File 4	Unused
------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

Over time you save more and more information on your disk, so it eventually gets close to being filled, as shown in the diagram below.

New files are added at the end of the list.

Root	File 1	Unused	File 3	File 4	File 5	File 6	Unused
------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

Suppose you remove files 4 and 5 to free up space on your disk. The disk now looks like this:

New deletions leave a large gap.

Root	File 1	Unused	File 3	Unused	File 6	Unused
------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

The next file you want to save is a large one—too big to fit in the unused space at the end of the list. Now FAT switches gears and starts at the beginning of the list to find available space. The area between files 1 and 3 is open, and

FAT begins to save your new file there. Since the file is so big, though, it won't all fit in that space. FAT continues saving it in the gap following file 3, creating a layout like the one shown here.

FAT creates a fragmented file.

Root	File 1	File 7A	File 3	File 7B	Unused	File 6	Unused
------	--------	---------	--------	---------	--------	--------	--------

This is quite convenient. It lets you take advantage of all the space on your disk without worrying about the physical location of files. But it has a disadvantage. When you read or write file 7, there is a delay as the disk head moves from one area to another to get to both parts. The more files on your disk and the more frequently the information in them changes, the more susceptible you are to this fragmentation. This can become a noticeable performance problem as your disk spends more and more time moving the head—time better spent reading or writing data.

And remember that fragmentation doesn't occur just from deleting files. Every time you add a record to a file, the file grows and the allocated space is no longer sufficient. Refer again to the unfragmented disk above: If file 2 expands, it must be moved entirely after file 3 (leaving the gap as if it were deleted) or the new information must be added after file 3, causing fragmentation.

Modern file systems such as the High Performance File System (HPFS) and NT File System (NTFS) are more intelligent in their allocation technique. Look at the last two diagrams: Both systems would realize that file 7 could fit entirely in the space left by the removal of files 4 and 5. Knowing that, HPFS and NTFS would keep it in one piece, as shown below.

NTFS and HPFS take advantage of contiguous space.

Root	File 1	Unused	File 3	File 7	File 6	Unused
------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

15,798 available allocation units on
disk
655,360 total bytes memory
525,152 bytes free

Look up the allocation unit size in Figure 1 (or divide by 2) to determine the amount of wasted space per file. In this CHKDSK report the allocation unit is 8,192, so the average loss per file is 4,096 bytes. Because the 512-byte units of HPFS and NTFS also have some loss, subtract 256 from your answer to find the potential savings per file. In this case, 4,096 minus 256 is 3,840 bytes per file you would reclaim (on the average). Now add the number of hidden files, directories, and

user files to find the total number of files on the disk: $55 + 301 + 7,387 = 7,743$. Multiplying 7,743 files by 3,840 bytes gives 29,733,120—approximately 29 megabytes of disk space that would suddenly become available by changing file systems.

FRAG...PROBLEMS...MENTATION Design decisions weren't just based on the assumption that the drives being managed by FAT were small. Those disks also contained relatively few files. As drives got larger and the number of files on them increased, the files became more susceptible to fragmentation. Since this forces your disk to work harder to access information, fragmentation can become a noticeable drag on system performance (see

the sidebar "Why Disks Become Fragmented"). More difficult to measure is how much the extra wear and tear on your disk may shorten its life. One indication of the seriousness of the problem is the number of utilities on the market designed to defragment FAT disks. Since Version 6.0, a DEFRAG utility has even been included in DOS.

OS/2 and Windows NT's enhanced file systems manage data much more intelligently to minimize fragmentation problems, as described in the sidebar. They can't eliminate it altogether, but it is much less significant, and you may never see fragmentation-driven performance penalties. Still, if you're looking

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Data Compression Facility/2

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Diskeeper

Executive Software International Inc., 701 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale, CA 91203-1242; 818-547-2050; fax, 818-545-8801.

GammaTech Utilities for OS/2

Softouch Systems, Inc., 1300 S. Meridian, #600, Oklahoma City, OK 73108-1751; 405-947-8080; fax, 405-632-6537.

Graham Utilities

WarpSpeed Computers, P.O. Box 212, Brunswick, VIC 3056, Australia; 61-3-384-1060; fax, 61-3-386-9979; BBS, 61-3-386-3104; e-mail, 100250.1645@compuserve.com.

for the best performance, it's good to know you can optimize HPFS partitions with WarpSpeed Computer's Graham Utilities for OS/2 or Softouch Systems' GammaTech Utilities for OS/2. Likewise, NTFS users can use Executive Software's Diskeeper utility.

For network administrators trying to manage highly active drives, Diskeeper offers Windows NT users the additional benefit of being able to keep the drive optimized at all times. A utility runs in the background and constantly resolves any new fragmentation problems. It runs at the lowest priority so that it does not affect the performance of your other programs.

Users tight on disk space will be pleased to hear that data compression utilities also are available for the enhanced file systems. Windows NT includes a compression program for NTFS partitions, and Proportional Software offers the Data Compression Facility/2 for HPFS. (See the Resources sidebar for details on these utilities.)

DEALING WITH FILENAME.WOES In the FAT system, filenames can consist of eight characters followed by a three-character extension. When floppy disks typically contained only a dozen files or so, that format provided ample latitude for differentiating the files. But when your file count reaches into the thousands, you can get into increasingly obscure names just to make them unique. Using subdirectories does let you use duplicate names, of course, but remembering what JOHN3148.PLN contains can still be difficult. It's much easier to identify a file named *Johnson house plans subdivision 31 lot 48*. Both HPFS and NTFS allow you to use filenames of up to 254 characters, including spaces for readability. In fact, you can use long names for directories as well, making directory lists much easier to understand. Be cautious, though, if you tend to work from the command line a lot. You'll quickly tire of entering file paths like "\Accounting\Accounts Receivable\Office Products\Fabulous Furniture Inc.AR."

IN SEARCH OF YOUR DATA To access your files, the file system must first locate the correct entry in the directory. Again assuming that the list of files would be short, FAT starts at the top of the directory and reads through the entries one at a time until it finds the desired file. The more files you have in a directory, the longer it can take to canvass this list. Both HPFS and NTFS keep the directory in a sorted b+ tree structure, so they can use more intelligent search techniques to find your file more quickly. A nice side benefit is that the directory list is always in alphabetic order. HPFS takes the additional step of putting directories near the center of the disk so the heads will never have to move more than half the disk width to find a file. Putting all these things together, you'll find that HPFS and NTFS will access your data faster than FAT, particularly on large partitions.

DISASTER RECOVERY Preventing data loss is another goal of the new file systems. If you've used computers for any length of time, chances are you've had a program lock up the system, you've accidentally hit the power switch, or you've had a thunderstorm bring you down.

Under such circumstances, it's easy for the file allocation table to become corrupted and no longer match the actual contents of the disk. This can cause some of your data to disappear suddenly. The CHKDSK utility can identify these problems and fix the FAT table, but it can't put the data back the way it was. It creates a series of FILExxx.CHK files that contain the missing data, but unless you're an expert on how your applications store information, those files are useless.

Both OS/2 and NT have beefed up CHKDSK to take advantage of safer storage techniques used by HPFS and NTFS. As a result, there's a far greater chance that CHKDSK will not only detect but actually correct problems that occur in those partitions. These enhanced file systems carry data security one step further by dynamically detecting bad sectors on the disk. If a bad sector is detected, both these file systems can dynamically mark the sector as unusable and transfer the data to a different sector.

PREVENTING UNWANTED ACCESS One of the biggest new features of Windows NT is its security system. But much of the control—the ability to specify users and their levels of access rights to specific files—can take place only on NTFS partitions. The entries in File Manager's Security menu are disabled on FAT and HPFS volumes.

WHY SHOULDN'T I CHANGE NOW? If you're still running old DOS/Windows applications, remember that they expect filenames to follow the 8.3 convention. While OS/2 will let DOS programs access HPFS partitions, and Windows NT lets DOS programs get to both HPFS and NTFS drives, those programs still cannot read directories and files that don't follow the old naming rules. That doesn't prevent you from changing file systems, but it does mean that you should stick to short names in directories that need to be read by old programs.

OS/2 and Windows NT let you leave DOS on your disk and boot either operating system. This is a great way of making the migration to a new operating system a gradual process. But remember that DOS won't be able to see HPFS or NTFS parti-

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tions, regardless of the length of the names used. So you may want to keep a FAT partition for DOS programs and data until you're sure everything runs properly on OS/2 or NT. Also, a lot of the extra information that OS/2 and NT keep about files is stored as Extended Attributes in a special area. DOS programs aren't aware of these attributes and will drop them. That includes backup programs, by the way. Make sure you use a backup program specifically designed for OS/2 or Windows NT.

A minor consideration is the amount of memory you have. Enhanced file systems have a lot more work to do, so naturally they require more memory to do it. If your system is already paging heavily, as evidenced by a large swap file, the additional overhead of HPFS or NTFS can actually harm performance slightly. The effect is rather small, though, and outweighed by the increased data reliability.

SO WHAT SHOULD I DO? If you aren't running old DOS/Windows programs, the decision is easy. If you're running only OS/2 programs you should move to HPFS, and if you're using only NT programs you should move to NTFS. While there aren't yet programs of the caliber of The Norton Utilities or Central Point's PC Tools for HPFS and NTFS, there are enough to take care of your basic needs. The first time you see a CHKDSK report that errors were fixed, you'll be glad you did.

If you are running a mix of program types, the decision may still be easy. As long as you run your old programs only under OS/2 or Windows NT, you can still move to the enhanced file systems. If you want to maintain the ability to boot DOS, though, you need to keep at least one FAT partition.

It's perfectly all right to be conservative and start your change with a small partition for a few weeks to develop a comfort level with the new file system. Chances are, you'll never go back. □

BRIAN PROFFIT IS A SENIOR CONTRIBUTING EDITOR FOR OS/2 MAGAZINE AND OS/2 DEVELOPER, AND IS THE AUTHOR OF OS/2 APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT TOOLS (PREMIER PUBLISHING) AND OS/2 INSIDE & OUT (OSBORNE MCGRAW-HILL).

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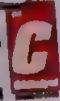
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Reading Notes Databases—Without Notes

What do you do when you need to access the information in a Lotus Notes database without actually starting Notes? With the right tools there is a way to access Notes databases in your own programs—just as if they were regular data files.

In our issue of January 24, 1995, we examined ways to enhance your Notes applications by attaching an external program to a push button on your Notes forms. We added a push button to a Notes document so you could automatically dial the phone number of a person whose name is contained in the document. It would be even more convenient, though, to develop a general solution that didn't require starting Notes, opening the appropriate database, and then opening the document for that particular person—all just to dial the phone.

In this issue, using Brainstorm Technologies' VB/Link for Lotus Notes and Microsoft's Visual Basic for Windows (or IBM's InterfloX and Watcom's VX-REXX for OS/2 users), we'll build upon that earlier program to create a new utility that reads the Notes database and displays a list of contacts and their phone numbers. You can then select the desired person and dial his number without having to run Notes itself. The code for the programs in the previous and present ar-

ticles can be downloaded from PC Mag-Net's Programming forum, archived as DIALER.ZIP.

A NEW VBX CONTROL VB/Link is a set of Visual Basic (VB) functions that allow access to and manipulation of Notes databases through its new Notes-Data control for VB. The control acts primarily as a focal point for calling methods to read and write Notes data. While most of its functions are strictly for getting Notes data to and from Visual Basic objects, it also contains functions for piping Notes information directly into VB grids or list boxes.

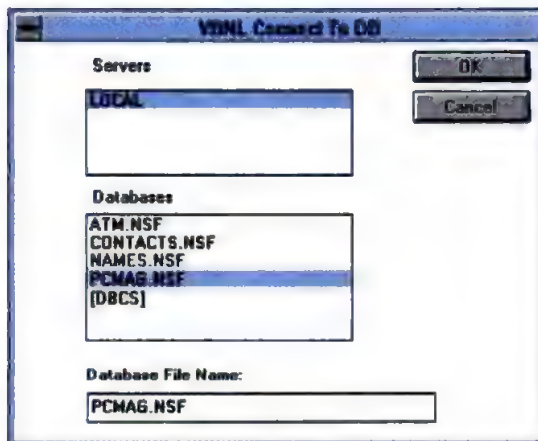


Figure 1: This is the VB/Link dialog that provides a direct connection to Notes databases.

So, begin a new project and create a grid nearly as wide as the form, leaving a little space at the top and an inch or so at the bottom of the form. Next, draw a rectangular area to hold the new Notes-Data control in the lower left corner of

the form. Size doesn't matter here, and you should set the Visible property to False.

The control must now be attached to the Notes database. In the Properties dialog, double-click on Database. As you can see from Figure 1, you'll be presented with a dialog very similar to the one Notes itself uses for selecting a database. Double-click on the desired server to get a list of the available databases, and then double-click on the desired database to make the connection. Now specify which form within that database you want to access. Double-click on the Table property, and the drop-down list box at the top of the properties window will allow you to select the specific Notes form you need.

To complete the utility window, add a command push button centered at the bottom of the form and change its caption to "Dial". You'll probably also want to change the caption for the form to something like "Contact Telephone List.". Your form should look similar to the one in Figure 2.

PUTTING MEAT ON THE SKELETON The next step is to attach code to the objects you've just created. Double-click on an empty area of the form to bring up the editor, and then enter—without the line numbers—the following Form_Load procedure:

```
1 Dim ret%
2 NotesData.Action = ACTION_LOGON
3 NotesData.Action = ACTION_RUNQUERY
4 ret% = VBLink_PipeNotesToGrid(Notes
  Data1, Grid1, 2)
5 NotesData.Action = ACTION_CLOSEQUERY
```

The first line declares the variable that will hold return codes. The second and third lines perform methods that VB/Link provides with the NotesData object: Line 2 logs onto the contact database, and line 3 runs a query against the view specified in the Table property. VB/Link mirrors Notes data in *result sets*, which are essentially tables in which each row is a separate document and the columns correspond to the fields in those documents. This correlates well with the VB grid control. The fourth line sends the results of the query directly into the grid you drew, and the fifth closes the connection to the Notes database.

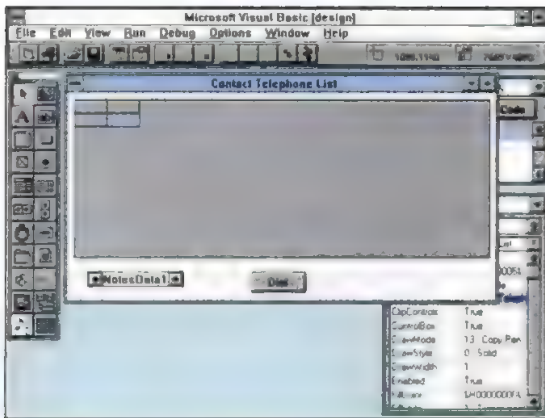


Figure 2: The NotesData control is on the left side of the phone number selection form.

Once a user has selected a person, he will click on the Dial command button. For completeness, though, you should put the following line of code in the (default) Grid1.DblClick procedure:

```
call Dial.Click [Repl.
```

to call the button's click routine. This gives a user the choice of simply double-clicking on the contact rather than clicking on the person and then on the Dial button.

The next step is to create that button code. Double-click on the command button to bring up the editor, and enter—without the line numbers—the following Command1_Click procedure:

```
1 Grid1.Row = Grid1.SelStartRow
2 Grid1.Col = 2
3 Phone$ = Grid1.Text
4 Form2.Show 1
```

Since the grid control is a table, the user could select any rectangular area. The first line restricts calling to one number at a time by specifying the first row selected. Line 2 picks the third column (numbering starts with 0) in that row. Note that the user could have clicked on the person's name, but this procedure moves the focus to the contact's phone number. Line 3 extracts the phone number into the variable Phone\$. (Yes, I know we haven't declared the variable, but I'll get to that in a moment.) Line 4 causes Visual Basic to display the second form as a modal window.

You don't remember creating a sec-

ond form? Okay, I cheated a little. Use the form created in the January 25, 1995, Notes extension story. Save it as Form2 in the directory where you're creating this new project. Then add that form to the new project. The window displays the phone number being dialed and prompts the user to press a button when the handset has been picked up so that the modem can be disconnected. To do that, though, you've got to get the phone number to the new form. Variables declared within a form's code are visible

only within that form, so you must define Phone\$ as a global variable, making it visible to all forms.

From VB's File menu, select New Module. The editor will open a new window for the declarations portion of Module1.BAS. Enter the line

```
Global Phone$
```

Now the phone number can be used by both forms. You'll need to double-click on an empty area of the second form, though, and modify its Load procedure.

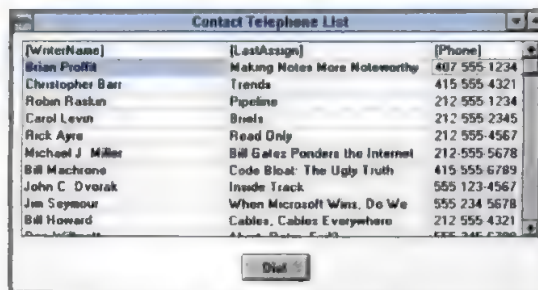


Figure 3: With a list like this, Windows users can easily dial any contact from a Notes database.

You must remove the Dim Phone\$ line from that procedure. You must also remove the line that extracts the phone number from the command-line arguments, since you're getting it directly this time. The remaining code (to prefix a 1 for long distance and actually to dial the number) works fine as it is.

There is one other change to the second form's code. The previous button-click routine contained an End statement to stop the program after hanging up the modem. Change that line to

```
Unload Form2
```

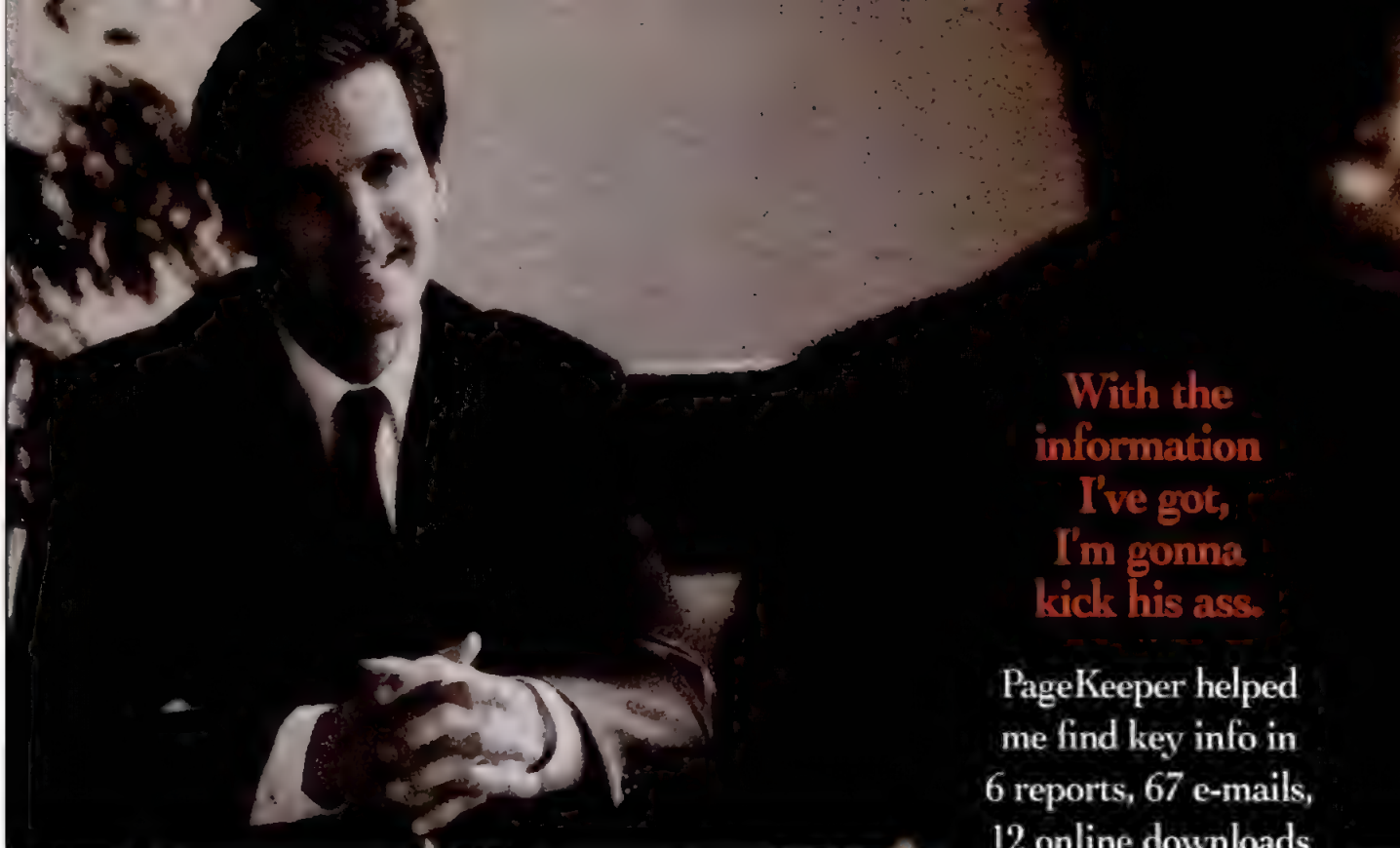
This will close the form and return the user to the contact list. Now save the project and create an .EXE file from it. You can add the new program to your desktop as a standalone contact dialer. Running the program should bring up a display similar to that shown in Figure 3. As you can see, VB/Link inserts the names by which Notes knows the fields into the first row to serve as column headings.

FOR OS/2 USERS TOO The OS/2 world can access Notes databases outside Notes as well, albeit through a slightly more convoluted procedure. IBM made a different design decision when developing InterfloX. Rather than depending upon a graphical development tool (as VB/Link depends on Visual Basic), InterfloX provides Notes access to any REXX program—including those that are totally character based. That is a real advantage for some purposes, but it has a downside as well. Whereas VB/Link provided simple development through a VBX control, InterfloX requires more complex programming to display Notes information. You could use any of a number of popular REXX tools to do the job, but for this particular example I'll be demonstrating with VX-REXX.

Open a new project and narrow the form to roughly a square. Move the pointer to the title bar, and while holding down the Alt key, click the left mouse button. The title bar will become a text-entry field, allowing you to change the window's title to something more meaningful like "Telephone Dialer".

Now create a list box that is nearly the full width of the form and extends down from the top to about an inch from the bottom. Then put in a push button that is centered underneath the list box. Use the Alt-<Left Mouse Button> trick so you can change the text on the button to the word "Dial." Your form should now look similar to the one depicted in Figure 4.

BRINGING IT TO LIFE Double-click on Init from the Section List to open the editor with the code that is executed when



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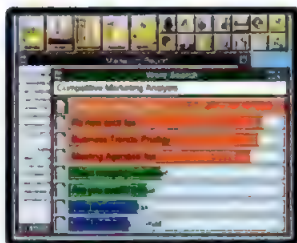


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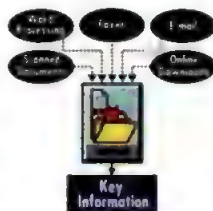
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PC Computing, Dec. 1994, p. 140

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the program is initialized. Move the cursor to the line below

```
call VRSet window, "Visible", 1
```

and enter—again, without the line numbers—the instructions listed in Figure 5.

The first line in Figure 5 simply initializes the Notes/InterfloX environment. The second line opens the specific Notes database you'll be working with and returns a database ID—a handle by which to access that database.

Actually accessing the contents of that database is an indirect process. Rather than simply reading through the documents serially, you must specifically request them using a document ID. Line 3 conducts a search of the database, selecting only those documents that represent the form in which you're interested. In addition to your data documents, the access control list used to determine who can read or change the information is also stored in document form in the database itself. So are the instructions on the views that are available. Line 3 extracts only our specific form type and creates a new compound variable (*writer* in this instance) that contains the document IDs that reference those documents. InterfloX follows the REXX standard of using element 0 of a compound variable to contain the total number of elements in the array.

```
1 call LtsNotes 'NOTESINIT', 'QUIET'
2 call LtsNotes 'DatabaseOpen', 'E:\NOTES\PCMAG.NSF', 'db_ID'
3 call LtsNotes 'DatabaseSearch', db_ID, 'writer', 'Select FORM = "Writer Info"'
4 do ThisDoc = 1 to writer.0
5   call LtsNotes 'DocRead', db_ID, writer.ThisDoc, 'docinfo'
6   do Field = 0 to docinfo.2.0
7     if docinfo.2.Field.1 = 'WriterName' then Person = docinfo.2.Field.3
8     if docinfo.2.Field.1 = 'Phone' then Leave
9   end
10  call VRMethod 'LB_1', 'AddString', Person '-' docinfo.2.Field.3
11 end
12 call LtsNotes 'databaseclose', db_ID
13 call LtsNotes 'notesterm'
```

Figure 5: Here is the code to enter when creating the OS/2 version of the telephone dialer.

Layout of the document information compound variable

```
Stem.1 Document ID
Stem.2.0 Number of fields (x) in this document
  Stem.2.x.1 Name of field x
  Stem.2.x.2 Data type (number, text, rich text, etc.)
  Stem.2.x.3 Field value
  Stem.2.x.4 Field options (protected, encrypted, name, signature, etc.)
  Stem.2.x.5 Field update command (used by DocWrite to update, add, or delete a field)
Stem.3 Date last modified
Stem.4 Document Class (Access control list, form, data, etc.)
Stem.5.y Document yes/no for privilege level y (y=1 to 5)
Stem.6 Unused
Stem.7 Origination ID information, used to control replication
```

Figure 6: This is the layout of the *docinfo* compound variable.

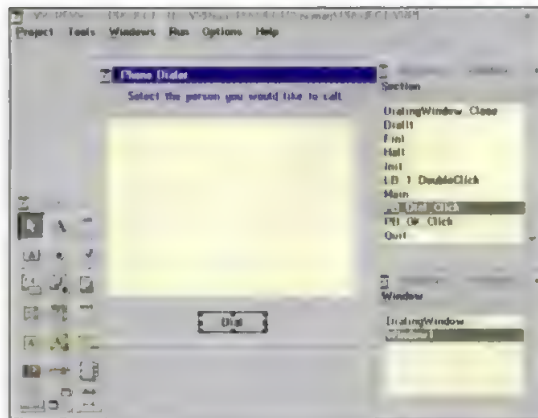


Figure 4: This is the phone-dialer form used when working with VX-REXX.

Line 4 begins a loop that steps through the document ID array and uses those handles to read the specific documents that they represent. Line 5 performs that read and puts all of the contents of the current document into a new compound variable called *docinfo*. The structure of this variable is described in Figure 6.

Having loaded the document, we now need to look through it for the name and phone information. Line 6 begins a loop through the fields found in the document whose layout is described in Figure 6. I use this technique rather than specifying field numbers, because forms change all the time. By looking for specific field names in lines 7 and 8, the program will

continue to work even if new fields are added, removed, or inserted later. The only assumption the program makes is that a contact's name appears before his phone number on the form.

Line 7 finds the contact's name and stores it for later usage. Line 8 detects that the current field is the phone number and exits the loop. Line 10 puts an entry in the list box consisting of the name we saved, a dash (a separator), and the value of the current field (the phone number). Finally, line 12 closes the Notes database and line 13 terminates the Notes/InterfloX connection.

MAKING THE CALL We now need to process the phone number the user selects when the Dial button is pressed. Click on Dial with the right mouse button, and select Click from the Event menu. This brings up the editor to allow us to enter instructions for the PB_1_Click event. Enter the following instructions, again omitting the line numbers shown:

```
1 call VRMethod 'LB_1',
  'GetSelectedStringList', 'person.'
2 parse var person.1 . '-' phone
3 call DialIt phone
```

Line 1 determines which entry the user picked and puts it into the variable *person*. Line 2 then parses that entry, using the dash we inserted as the delimiter that indicates the start of the phone number. Line 3 calls the DialIt procedure, passing it the phone number that we want to call.

At this point, we must again cheat as we did with the Visual Basic version and use the window and program that we created in the earlier article to display the phone number and make the call. Copy that window as Window2 and, since it is no longer the primary window, rename the Window1_Create routine DialIt. Only a couple of small changes are needed. Window1_Create was written to take the phone number from the command line. We now want it to take the num-



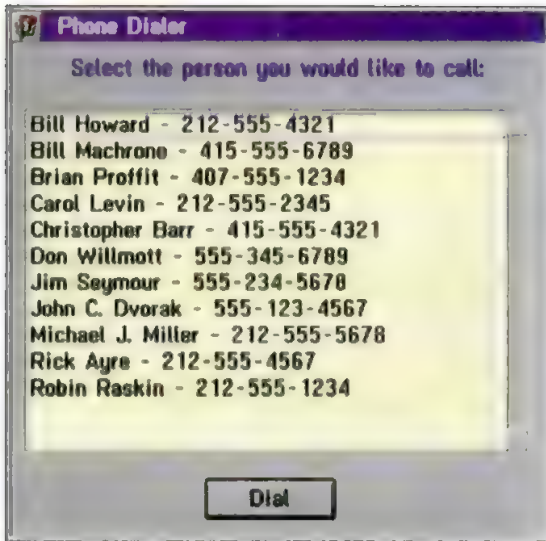


Figure 7: This is the phone dialer produced under VX-REXX.

ber as an argument, so change the line

```
Phone = Strip(InitArgs.1,, '')
```

to read

```
Phone = Arg(1)
```

Also, since this is no longer the primary window, we need to load it manually with the instruction

```
DialWindow =  
VRLoad(VRWindow(),  
VRWindowPath(), Window2)
```

As in the Visual Basic version, we need to change the action taken when the user picks up the handset. Rather than ending the program, we want to close that window to return to the contact list, so replace the END instruction with

```
call VRDestroy DialWindow
```

The last bit of cleanup is to allow the user to double-click on a contact rather than clicking on the person and then the Dial button. Click on the list box with the right mouse button and select the DoubleClick event. Enter the following instruction:

Call PB_1_Click

The program will then handle double-clicks automatically. Save your project, create an executable, and directly attached to your Notes database you will now have the new automatic phone dialer shown in Figure 7.

ONLY THE BEGINNING Both VB/Link and InterfloX allow much more complex manipulation of Notes databases than I've demonstrated in this column. One reason people limit their use of Lotus Notes is that the data isn't sufficiently accessible outside Notes, as it would be when using a more traditional database. As you can see, however, the right tool can open up your Notes information to as many manipulations as you can imagine. □

BRIAN PROFFITT IS A SENIOR CONTRIBUTING EDITOR FOR OS/2 MAGAZINE AND OS/2 DEVELOPER, AND IS THE AUTHOR OF OS/2 APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT TOOLS (PREMIER PUBLISHING) AND OS/2 INSIDE & OUT (OSBORNE MCGRAW-HILL).

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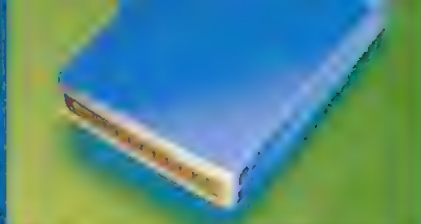
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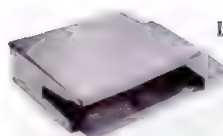
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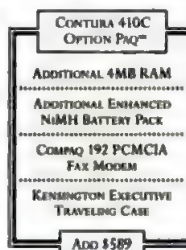
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Toolkits

BY BOB FLANDERS

Automate Your Software Testing

Software testing—that repeating cycle of setting field values, checking boxes, clicking buttons, and checking results—is hugely tedious. Fixes to one part of the program may break another, so everything must be retested after a fix. Oversights can easily occur, letting bugs slip by undetected.

SQA TeamTest, Version 3.0 (\$2,495), relieves testing drudgery and prevents oversights by automating every step of the process. Designed for Microsoft Windows-based programs, TeamTest overcomes the problems in testing graphical interfaces with an object-oriented approach that can identify buttons and windows even when they are repositioned.

INTEGRATED COMPONENTS TeamTest has two main components: SQA Manager and SQA Robot. SQA Manager lets you organize test plans with a tree display. The first level includes broad goals such as “Test Database Interface.” Subrequirements beneath this might include “Add New Record” and “Delete a Record.” Test procedures can be associated with test requirements, and all information is stored in the Test Repository.

You can generate test procedures automatically with SQA Robot, a macro recorder that is linked to SQA Manager through the Test Repository. If you’ve given names to your test procedures in SQA Manager, you can select them in SQA Robot. But you don’t need to use SQA Manager to plan your tests; you can create and name procedures on the fly within SQA Robot, and these also will be stored in the Test Repository. The procedures generated by SQA Robot are written in Microsoft Visual Basic, rather than in a proprietary scripting language.

OBJECT-ORIENTED One of the challenges of automated testing of Windows programs is identifying objects on the screen. This is difficult because objects can’t be reliably identified by location. A related problem is recording mouse actions for use in the script. You want to record meaningful mouse movements and ignore extraneous ones.

TeamTest solves both problems with its object-oriented approach. Buttons, for example, can be identified by the text on the button, by index (for example, the third button in the window), or by Windows ID. If you are testing applications written with Gupta SQLWindows, Microsoft Visual Basic, or PowerBuilder applications, you can identify objects by their internal name—an error-free method that is independent of the object’s physical features. Only mouse movements that act upon objects are recorded; all other mouse activity is ignored.

Each test procedure is associated with

a test case that describes the correct outcome. There are 19 predefined tests, such as matching bitmaps or checking list contents. You can also create user-defined tests that use external program functions for additional conditions.

You test programs within SQA Robot by replaying the test procedures. During replay, SQA Robot notes in the Test Repository any variances between expected outcomes and what actually occurs. You view the results through SQA Manager, which lists every test performed, the date it was performed, and whether it passed or failed. You can click on a specific test for more information. In addition to on-screen viewing, SQA Manager can create customizable, printed test reports.

TeamTest works only with Windows programs (both single- and multiuser). You cannot test DOS programs, even in a DOS box, and you cannot check low-level activity such as data to and from a serial port unless that data is displayed in a window. TeamTest’s strength is in testing the performance of Windows programs that operate mainly through a graphical user interface, and it does this very well.

► **SQA TeamTest, Version 3.0.** List price: \$2,495 per station. Requires: 386-based PC or better (486-based PC or better recommended), 8MB RAM, 18MB hard disk space, Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later. SQA Inc., 10 State Street, Woburn, MA 01801; 800-228-9922; fax, 617-932-3280.

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OFF THE STACK

• **ISDN*tek** has released the Win-ISDN SDK (\$199) for developing Windows-based applications that use ISDN cards to communicate over reliable, high-speed ISDN phone lines. ISDN cards can be used for remote access (including Internet access), file transfer, image transfer, and voice capture. The package includes the WinISDN.DLL driver, sample routines in Visual Basic for dialing and voice capture, and documentation for the WinISDN API. *ISDN*tek*; 415-712-3000; fax, 415-712-3003.

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• **Raindrop Software’s** Open Mail System (OMS) eases development of e-mail applications by simplifying tasks such as logging on, sending mail, checking incoming mail, sending documents, listing users, and logging off. OMS supports the three most common e-mail protocols—VIM, MAPI, and MHS—used by cc:Mail, daVinci, Lotus Notes, Microsoft Mail, and others. The Visual Basic version (OMS/VBX) retails for \$495; the C/C++ libraries retail for \$995. Source code pricing is determined on an individual basis. *Raindrop Software*; 214-234-2611; fax, 214-234-2674.

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WHAT HAPPENS

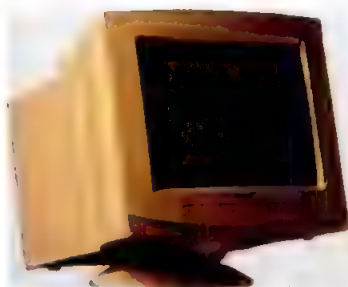
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Power Programming

BY RAY DUNCAN

Setting Up a Web Server

A century or so from now, observers looking back on the 1990s will consider the advent of the Internet and the World-Wide Web one of the great watersheds of history—comparable technologically to the invention of movable type, artistically to the Renaissance, and socially to the Declaration of Independence. You may think this assessment grandiose, but look around you: The great on-line body of individually authored and hyperlinked information that Ted Nelson envisioned decades ago as the Xanadu project is day by day crystallizing before our eyes. Tens of thousands of creative network citizens across the world are setting up their own information servers and joining the Web. In the process, those net citizens are completely bypassing the Establishment with its bureaucracies, class hierarchies, and power structures, not to mention the entire monolithic apparatus of the traditional publishing industry!

But the World-Wide Web has its more mundane applications as well. In the medical center where I work, we have been looking for several years at the concept of electronically publishing information to be used within and without the hospital. Until a year ago, the difficulties involved in such an undertaking seemed almost insuperable. One factor was the diversity of the information itself, which ranged from simple phone directories to highly technical policies and procedures to graphical entities such as maps, pictures, and X-ray images. Secondly, many types of computers and operating systems would somehow need to be supplied with viewer software, which had to be disseminated to potential users both inside and outside the

hospital and then kept up to date. The users' varying levels of computer expertise, literacy, and adaptability also had to be taken into account.

When the World-Wide Web exploded out of nowhere in 1994 to become the preferred vehicle for information publishing on the Internet (and the darling of journalists, hackers, academicians, and even the White House), we soon realized that the Web was the answer to our internal electronic-publishing dilemma. Web servers and browsers handle text and graphics with equal facility. The browsers are user-friendly and can overcome the computer phobia of even the most backward physicians and administrators. Servers and browsers are available for every important type of CPU and operating system. And best of all, the essential software is all free

or can be licensed at nominal cost! The medical center is now rapidly standardizing on the Web as the enabling technology for the dissemination of every type of information to its employees, contractors, business partners, and clients. And you can do the same in your organization.

One aspect of Web browser software that has rarely been brought out—in spite of countless articles in the trade press—is that it is not really network-dependent in any way. Of course, the most common use of Web browsers is to retrieve text and graphics across a network connection from a Web server at a remote site, but

the material can just as easily reside on the same machine as the browser. In fact, a Web browser can be used as a stand-alone viewer for compilations of articles and graphics or “flattened databases” much as we have discussed the use of the WinHelp viewer in the past. In one case that I am aware of, a group of biologists distributed an entire CD-ROM full of specialized data with an assortment of Web browsers. In this way, they bypassed any need to pay royalties on viewer software and achieved a level of cross-platform compatibility that would have been completely unthinkable just a year ago.

In my last column (*PC Magazine*, April 11, 1995), I provided you with a fairly cosmic overview of World-Wide Web terminology and server implementation issues. In this installment, we'll look a little more closely at the process of setting up your own Web server and introduce you to document formatting for the Web.

GETTING STARTED The first step in setting up a Web server is to decide which hardware platform and operating system to use. Web server software is available

*The World-Wide Web
exploded out of nowhere
in 1994 to become the
preferred vehicle for
information publishing
on the Internet.*

for all the common varieties of personal computers and workstations, so your decision can be based on economics, convenience, and compatibility with the existing machines on your local area network. It's important to note, though, that you don't need a high-end computer for a Web server. The Web server's

function is simply to store and ship files, so network speeds are a much more important constraint on the Web server's performance than CPU power. It's a good idea, however, to start out with a relatively large hard disk; I recommend at least 1GB. This way you won't be forced to endure the hassle and downtime of a hard disk upgrade for at least a year or two.

The second, crucial step is to arrange for TCP/IP connectivity for your machine. This means that your machine must be connected to the network with a network interface card and the appropriate low-level network drivers. In addition, a

HTML COMMANDS

Structural Commands

<HTML> ... </HTML>

Delimits the beginning and end of an HTML document.

<HEAD> ... </HEAD>

Delimits the beginning and end of the "head" portion of an HTML document.

<BODY> ... </BODY>

Delimits the beginning and end of the "body" portion of an HTML document.

<TITLE> ... </TITLE>

Delimits the "title" string for an HTML document. These tags must occur within the "head" section.

<ADDRESS> ... </ADDRESS>

Delimits the "address" text for an HTML document. These tags must occur within the "body" section. By convention, they are used to frame the name of the document author, an e-mail address, and the date of the last modification.

Paragraph-Formatting Commands

<P>

Indicates the end of a paragraph and thus the end of a block of text that can be "reflowed" with automatic line wrapping. The paragraph is separated from the following paragraph by approximately one line's worth of white space. No **</P>** tag is in the current versions of HTML.

**
**

Forces a line break (a "hard return"). The line is not followed by any extra white space. No **</BR>** tag is in the current versions of HTML.

<H1> ... </H1>

Delimits a "level one" heading. All headings are separated from the surrounding text by approximately one line's worth of white space in the font size used for the heading. **<H1>** headings are larger than **<H2>** headings, and so on.

<H2> ... </H2>

Delimits a "level two" heading.

<H3> ... </H3>

Delimits a "level three" heading.

<H4> ... </H4>

Delimits a "level four" heading.

<H5> ... </H5>

Delimits a "level five" heading.

<H6> ... </H6>

Delimits a "level six" heading.

<PRE> ... </PRE>

Delimits text that is to be displayed in a nonproportional font with all spacing intact and without automatic line wrap.

<BLOCKQUOTE> ... </BLOCKQUOTE>

Delimits text to be treated as a quotation. Typically indented by the visual equivalent of "one tab stop" and separated from the preceding and following paragraphs by an arbitrary amount of white space.

<LISTING> ... </LISTING>

Delimits text to be displayed as program listing.

Text-Formatting Commands

** ... **

Physical style: Boldface.

<I> ... </I>

Physical style: Italic.

<U> ... </U>

Physical style: Underline.

<TT> ... </TT>

Physical style: Typewriter (nonproportional) text.

** ... **

Logical style: Emphasis (often rendered as italic).

** ... **

Logical style: Strong emphasis (often rendered as boldface).

<CODE> ... </CODE>

Logical style: Used for HTML directives.

<SAMP> ... </SAMP>

Logical style: Sample output of a user command.

<KBD> ... </KBD>

Logical style: Keyboard character.

<VAR> ... </VAR>

Logical style: Program variable.

<DFN> ... </DFN>

Logical style: Definition.

<CITE> ... </CITE>

Logical style: Citation.

List Commands

** ... **

Delimits an unordered (bulleted) list.

** ... **

Delimits an ordered (numbered) list.

Indicates the start of an item within an ordered or unordered list. No **** tag is in the current versions of HTML.

<DL> ... </DL>

Delimits a "definition" list, composed of a variable number of alternating "terms" and "definitions."

<DT>

Indicates the start of a "term" within a definition list.

<DD>

Indicates the start of a "definition" within a definition list.

Anchor Commands

** ... **

Declares a hyperlink. The text within the quotation marks is the Universal Resource Locator (URL) of a target document, a relative path to a document, or a label within the current document. The text between the tags constitutes the hyperlink that is seen by the user; it is typically displayed in color and/or with a special attribute such as underlining. When the user clicks on the displayed text, the browser retrieves the target document (or scrolls to the label, if in the current document) and displays it.

** ... **

Declares a label within a document that can be used as the target of a hyperlink. The text within the quotes is the label and is invisible to the user. The text between the tags is displayed to the user without special formatting.

Figure 1: These are the basic HTML text-formatting commands by category. Additional text-related tags exist but are rarely used.

TCP/IP protocol software stack must be installed on your machine. The TCP/IP software must be configured with your machine's IP number and the IP numbers of your network gateway machines and DNS servers. Any routers on your network may need to have their filtering tables updated so that TCP/IP traffic from your machine will pass through the routers and ultimately to the Internet. Finally, you must update the DNS servers for your net-

work domain with the name, Ethernet ID, and IP number of your machine.

Installing and procuring the TCP/IP stack are quite different for each platform. Unix workstations include TCP/IP support as a matter of course—it's part of the definition of a workstation. The TCP/IP stack on Unix systems is configured by cryptic text files that are scattered all over the boot volume, but the default configuration usually works fine. Mi-

crosoft Windows NT includes a TCP/IP protocol stack, but the setup program does not install it automatically; you must refer to the on-line help to install and configure TCP/IP as a separate step after the system is running. Configuration is carried out by a standard Windows NT Control Panel applet and is quite straightforward if you understand the terminology.

OS/2, Version 3.0, includes TCP/IP support, and the configuration process is

relatively trouble-free. Macintosh System 7.5 includes the Apple TCP/IP protocol stack (called MacTCP), but the configuration process is uncharacteristically obscure until you have done it a few times. Earlier versions of Macintosh System do not include MacTCP, but a licensed copy is bundled with virtually every Macintosh communications or TCP/IP utility product, and it can also be purchased separately for a nominal fee. Microsoft Windows 3.1 users must resort to public-domain implementations or purchase one of the several expensive third-party Windows TCP/IP packages.

The network connectivity and TCP/IP issues are pretty exotic from a software developer's point of view, so you will need to work closely with your company's network support staff and/or your Internet services provider to get everything properly set up. Those worthy folk must allocate an IP number and machine name for your machine and update the routers and DNS servers anyway, and it's a smart move to take advantage of their experience and expertise rather than trying to figure out how to do everything yourself. Believe me, you don't want to get entangled in the arcane details of network management and infrastructure—life is too short!

The third step is to get your hands on the actual Web server software for your machine type and operating system. This is most easily accomplished via the Web itself. Obtain and install a Web browser (such as Cello, Mosaic, or Netscape) for your machine, use the "Open Location" or "Open URL" command to view the World-Wide Web home page at CERN (<http://info.cern.ch>), and navigate from there to the pages listing Web server software. These pages typically allow you to click on a hyperlink to download the server software and documentation in a single compressed archive file—Z format for Unix systems, SIT for Macintosh systems, and ZIP for Windows and Windows NT.

Next you use a system-specific utility to unpack the Web-server archive file. Follow the installation procedure described in the included doc files to set up a

home page for your new Web server (a sample home page is usually included with the server software). Then go to another machine running a Web browser on your network and test the connectivity to your Web server. The logistics of these steps can vary wildly across system types: On a Unix workstation this test can be an all-day adventure, while on Windows NT and Macintosh machines it is literally only a few minutes' work. During the prototyping phase, you may opt to run the Web server software on your own workstation or personal computer for convenience while tweaking the various files, but eventually you'll want a dedicated machine for this purpose to maximize the server's availability and reliability.

In my own case, I had a networked machine already set up running Windows NT, Version 3.5, and Microsoft SQL Serv-

more than adequate to run all three servers (SQL, FTP, and Web) simultaneously with good response times.

For Web server software, I selected the program HTTPS, Version 0.96, developed by the European Microsoft Windows NT Academic Center (EMWAC). This organization, which has also developed WAIS and Gopher servers for Windows NT, is located at Edinburgh University and is sponsored by DataLink Computers, Digital Equipment Corp., Microsoft Corp., Research Machines, and Sequent. (HTTPS stands for *Hypertext Transport Protocol Server*; HTTP is the Internet protocol that Web servers and browsers use to communicate with each other.) You can download the EMWAC HTTPS program and its documentation at no charge from EMWAC's own Web server (http://emwac.ed.ac.uk/html/internet_toolchest/top.html) or by FTP;

versions are available for the Intel 386 or higher, the DEC Alpha, and the MIPS CPUs.

If the TCP/IP protocol stack has already been configured on the Windows NT machine, EMWAC's HTTPS server could hardly be simpler to use. The downloaded archive file unpacks into the following individual files:

- HTTPS.EXE—the Web (HTTP protocol) server;
- HTTPS.CPL—the Control Panel applet for the server;
- HTTPS.HLP—the Control Panel applet's on-line -help file;
- HTTPS.DOC—the documentation for HTTPS as a Word for Windows file;

- HTTPS.PS—the documentation as a PostScript file;
- HTTPS.WRI—the documentation as a Windows Write file;
- EGSCRIPT.ZIP—sample CGI script programs (more about this in my next article);
- COPYRIGHT.TXT—the copyright statement for the software;
- README—miscellaneous release notes.

To install the software, you must first log in as administrator so you have access rights to all directories. Create a top-level directory (named something like C:\HTTP) that will serve as the home di-

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>CSMC Pediatrics Home Page</TITLE>
</HEAD>
<BODY>
<IMG SRC=pix/peds.gif><BR>
<HR>
<H2>Local Information Resources</H2>
<A HREF="refguide/refguide.htm">Physician's Referral Guide</A><BR>
<A HREF="guideln/guideln.htm">Clinical Guidelines and Pathways</A><BR>
<A HREF="pedsref/pedsref.htm">Pediatric Clinical Reference</A><BR>
<A HREF="neoref/neoref.htm">Neonatology Clinical Reference</A><BR>
<A HREF="phone/phone.htm">Pediatric Phone & Beeper Directory</A><BR>
<A HREF="resprog/res_peds.htm">Pediatric Residency Program</A><BR>
<A HREF="maps/maps.htm">Maps and Directions to CSMC</A><BR>
<HR>
<H2>Resources Elsewhere on the Internet</H2>
<A HREF="netdir.htm#pediatrics">Pediatric Resources</A><BR>
<A HREF="netdir.htm#genetics">Medical Genetics Resources</A><BR>
<A HREF="netdir.htm#medicine">General Medical Resources</A><BR>
<A HREF="netdir.htm#funstuff">Fun Stuff</A><BR>
<A HREF="netdir.htm#directories">Internet Directories</A><BR>
<HR>
<ADDRESS>
Created 12/27/94 / Last modified 1/27/95<BR>
Ahmanson Pediatric Center / Cedars-Sinai Medical Center / duncan@csmc.edu
</ADDRESS>
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

Figure 2: The HTML code for the home page of my own Web server.

er, so I decided to run the Web server software on the same host. This has proved to be a fortunate decision: Windows NT 3.5 is an incredibly stable system, it includes an FTP server daemon (which is important when you want to maintain the Web server at a distance), and it runs ordinary Windows and DOS programs quite well. This means I could continue to use all my familiar editors and other tools. Although the machine is only midrange or less by today's standards (a 33-MHz 486 with 16MB RAM and an Adaptec SCSI adapter, 1GB hard disk, Hewlett-Packard DAT tape drive, and NEC double-speed CD-ROM drive), it has turned out to be

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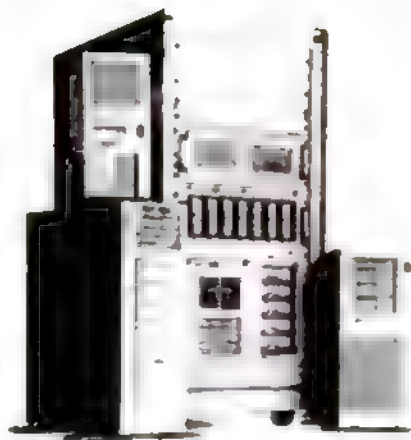
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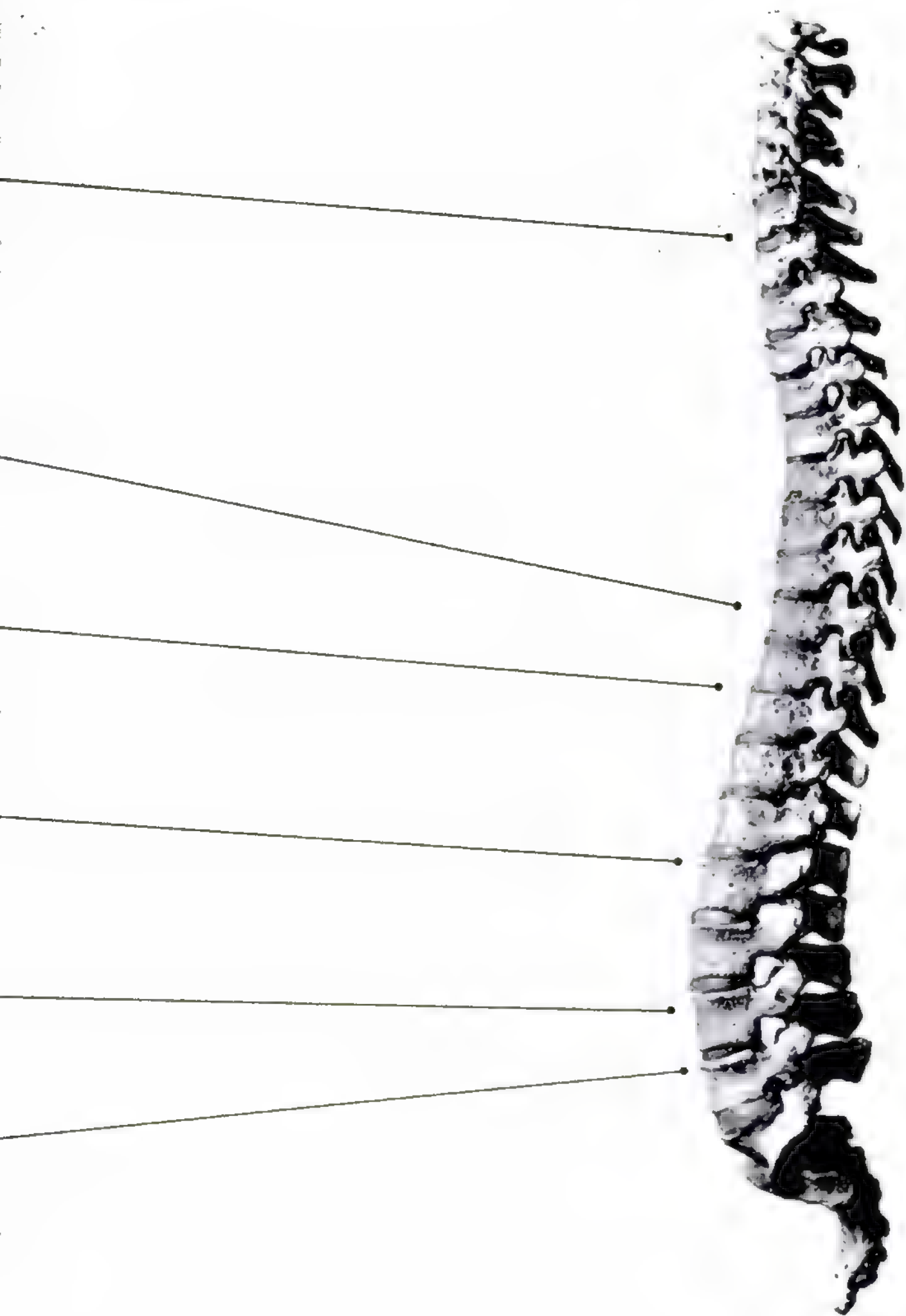


Fig. 1 Backbone

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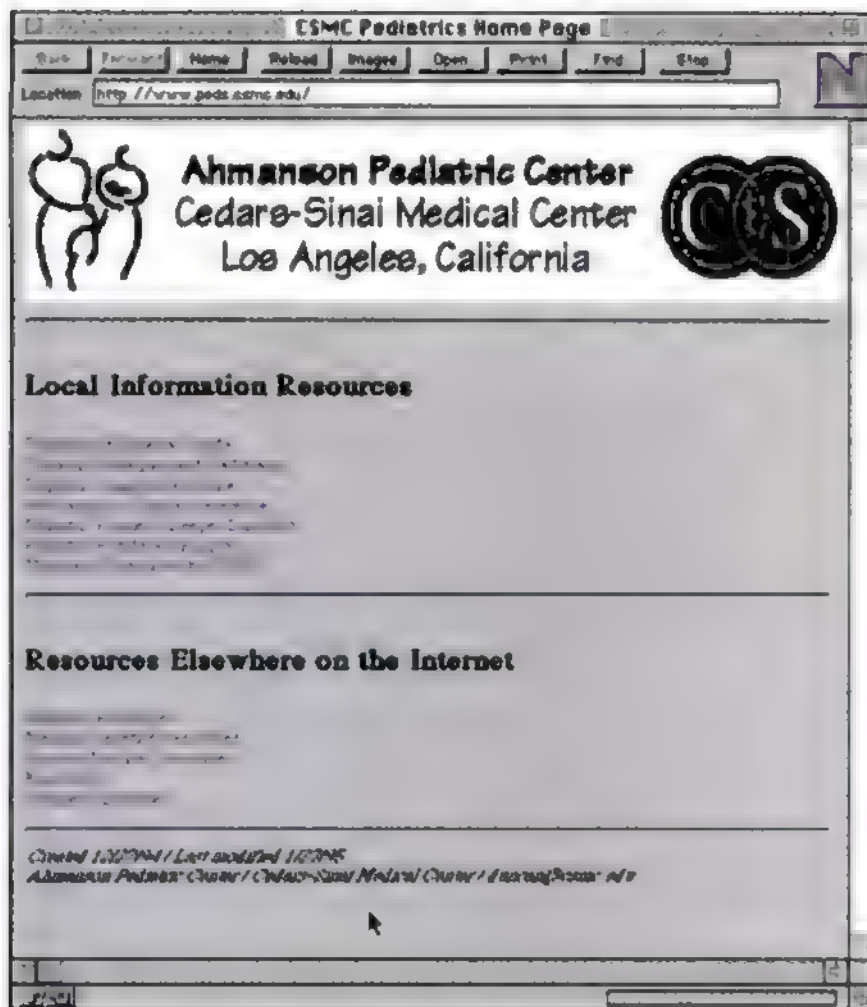


Figure 3: My Web server's home page appears this way in the Netscape browser.

rectory for the documents published with your Web server. Move the Web server program HTTPS.EXE, the Control Panel applet HTTPS.CPL, and the help file HTTPS.HLP to their final locations (usually C:\WINNT\SYSTEM32). Open up a DOS command window and run the HTTPS.EXE file with the following -INSTALL command line parameter:

```
C>HTTPS -INSTALL <Enter>
```

This causes the Web server to register itself with the system's Service Manager and Event Logger. Next, select the Windows NT Program Manager, start up the Control Panel, and double-click on the HTTP Server icon.

You can then configure various aspects of the Web server such as the name and location of its home directory, the TCP/IP port that it will use for communications, and so on. In most instances, the default settings will be fine. Finally, return to the Control Panel, double-click on the Services icon, and configure the HTTP Server service to start up automatically when the system is booted. That's all there is to it—in less than 10 minutes, you are an electronic publisher on the World-Wide Web! But now comes the real work: adding content to your Web server! To build this con-

tent, you have to get your brain around a document-coding standard called HTML.

AN INTRODUCTION TO HTML Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) is a scheme for representing the appearance and content of a document as a stream of plain ASCII text. The stream consists of reserved tokens, or commands, interspersed with the text that makes up the meat of the document. In this respect, HTML is conceptually similar to Rich Text Format (RTF), which I discussed in the March 14, 1995, column. But in practice, HTML is closer to the industry's Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML) than RTF. In fact, HTML can be thought of as a degenerative subset of SGML.

HTML, like SGML, is a *tag-based* language. The structural elements of a document and the text formats within the document are delineated by symmetric pairs of tags, which are simply ASCII sequences of characters with special delimiters. (There are a few exceptions to the pairing rule, although they may disappear in the future.) But while SGML is extremely general, extensible, and customiz-

able, and thus almost infinitely flexible, HTML (in its present form anyway) is specific, narrowly scoped, and not extensible or customizable at all. But this means you can prepare HTML documents with even the simplest ASCII text editor, whereas SGML document preparation requires workstation-based tools with mind-boggling price tags.

The basic HTML commands you need to be familiar with to create your first Web pages fall into five categories (Figure 1):

- structural commands that identify a file as an HTML document and delineate the elements within the document;
- paragraph-formatting commands to delineate headings and force line breaks or paragraph breaks;
- character-formatting commands that apply various styles to a stream of text;
- list commands that format ordered (numbered) lists, unordered (bulleted) lists, and commented ("definition") lists; and
- anchor commands that encode a hyperlink from one document to another (or from one location in a document to another location in the same document) or encode the destination of such a hyperlink.

If one starts with the view-from-Earth-orbit of an HTML file, it consists of the balanced pair of structural tags <HTML> and </HTML>, with a bunch of stuff in between:

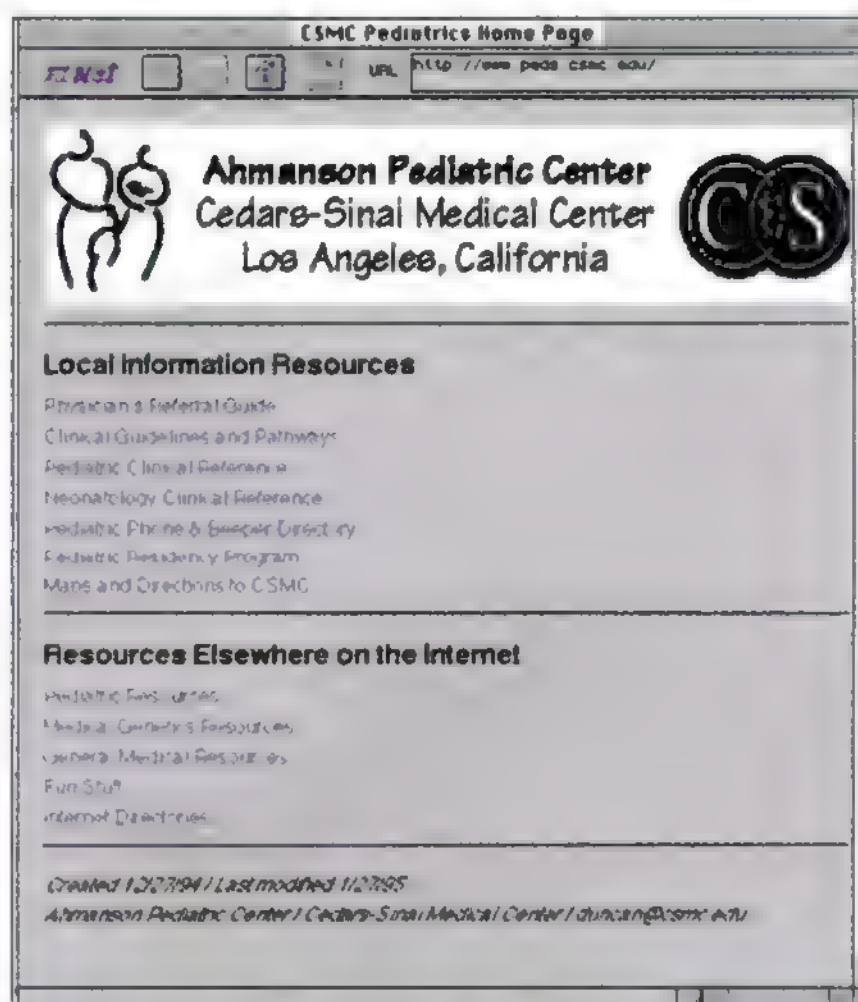


Figure 4: My Web server's home page looks like this when viewed in the MacWeb browser.

```
<HTML>
```

```
</HTML>
```

The <HTML> tags tell a Web browser that it is dealing with an HTML text stream and not a binary resource of some kind or an alien document-encoding convention. At the next level of detail, the HTML document is divided into a *head* section and a *body* section:

```
<HTML>
```

```
<HEAD>
```

```
</HEAD>
```



```
<BODY>
.
.
.
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

Normally, not too much goes into the `<HEAD>` section of an HTML document, mainly just a particular chunk of text called the document title. This is marked by `<TITLE>` and `</TITLE>` tags and used by Web browsers to update their title bars and hotlists. For example:

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>My Document Title</TITLE>
</HEAD>
<BODY>
.
.
.
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

The "title" is not, in spite of its name, the text that is perceived by the user of the Web browser as the document's main title or heading, because it does not appear within the client area of the browser window. This point often confuses newcomers to HTML coding since it is not explained clearly in most HTML tutorials.

Within the `<BODY>` section of an HTML document, we find the actual content that is presented to the user by the Web browser. The `<BODY>` section consists of a flexible mixture of headings, paragraphs of text separated by white space, and lists. Six levels of headings are supported, as well as the several types of lists already mentioned. Some rudimentary control of text flow at the sub-paragraph level is provided by commands that force line breaks or put the text into a nonproportional font and disable automatic line wrapping. Within the substance of paragraphs or list items, streams of text can be emphasized in various ways (bold-face, italic, underline, or nonproportional font) or designated as *anchors*.

For example, the following HTML document

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
```

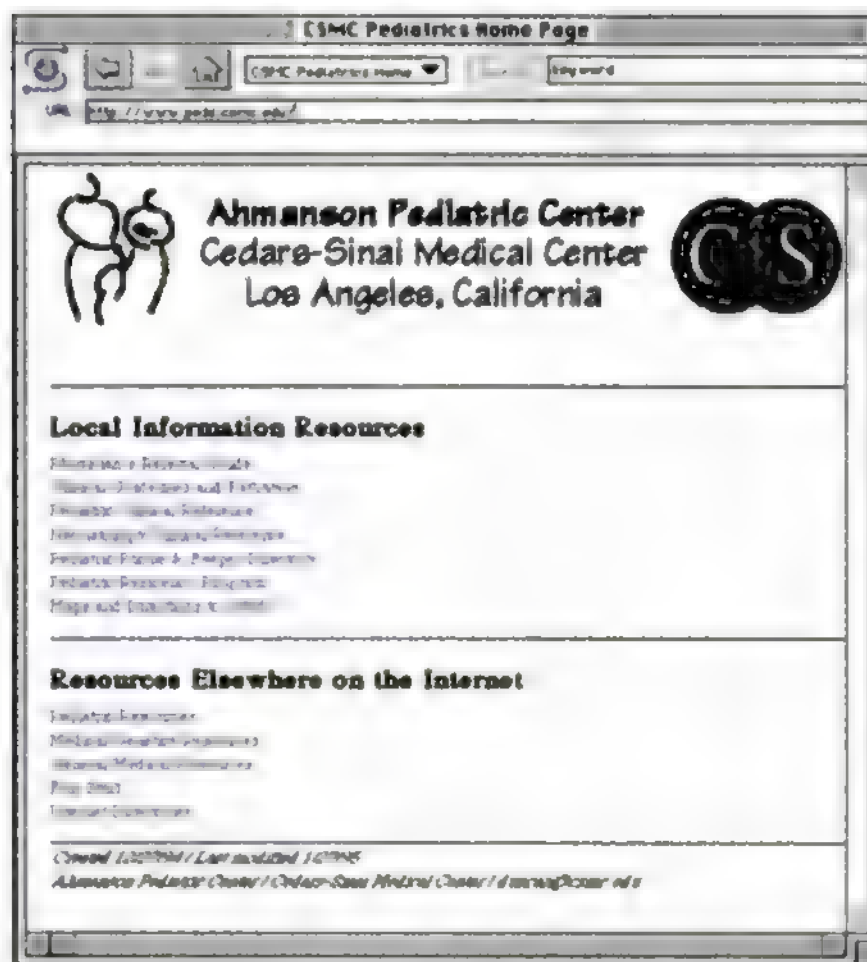


Figure 5: Here's how my Web server's home page looks in the Mosaic browser.

```
<TITLE>My Document Title</TITLE>
</HEAD>
<BODY>
<H1>My First Heading</H1>
This is the <B>first</B>
paragraph.<P>
This is the <I>second</I>
paragraph.<P>
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

would look like this in a Web browser:

My First Heading

This is the **first** paragraph.

This is the *second* paragraph.

The text of the headings and paragraphs, and the spaces between them, are automatically wrapped and reflowed according to the resolution of the screen and the size of the Web browser's window, which brings up some interesting points. HTML encodes the structure and style of a document, but the actual appearance of the document in terms of typefaces, character sizes, spacing between paragraphs, and so on is the province of the Web browser. The browser is allowed a certain amount of poetic license while trying to make the best of the resources and capabilities of the machine on which it is running (Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5). Additionally, some browsers are smarter or more forgiving

than others, so if you make an error in your HTML coding or nest several different styles inside each other, the results you get may be quite different from one browser to another.

Web servers, in contrast, are intentionally rather stupid beasts. A Web server just listens on a particular TCP/IP port for requests arriving via the HTTP and delivers up files in response to those requests; it doesn't much care whether the contents of those files are HTML, Sanskrit, or Klingon. The Web browser program has the problem of figuring out whether it can actually render the file on the screen and, if not, looking around in the user's system and finding some other helper program to do the work on its be-

half (video and audio clips are typically handled in this manner). From this you might guess that a Web server could be implemented in just about any reasonably powerful language, including interpreted scripting languages such as PERL, which has actually been done.

In my next Power Programming column, I'll go into more detail about document preparation, interactive forms, and the use of scripts and queries to build Web materials on the fly. In the meantime, you'll soon discover that manual editing of HTML documents to insert the necessary tags is tiring and prone to error. Go on-line to the Inter@ctive Week (IAWEEK) Forum on ZiffNet or the World-Wide Web home page at CERN and download one of the many specialized editors that automate HTML tag insertion and syntax checking. When I checked the IAWEEK Forum at the time of this writing, the Forum's libraries contained no less than three different HTML editors for Windows—HotMetal, HTML Assistant, and HTML HyperEdit—as well as some WinWord 2.0 and WinWord 6.0 document templates for HTML generation.

THE IN-BOX Please send your comments and suggestions to me at any of the following e-mail addresses: PC MagNet: 72241,52; MCI Mail: RDUNCAN; Internet: DUNCAN@CERF.NET □



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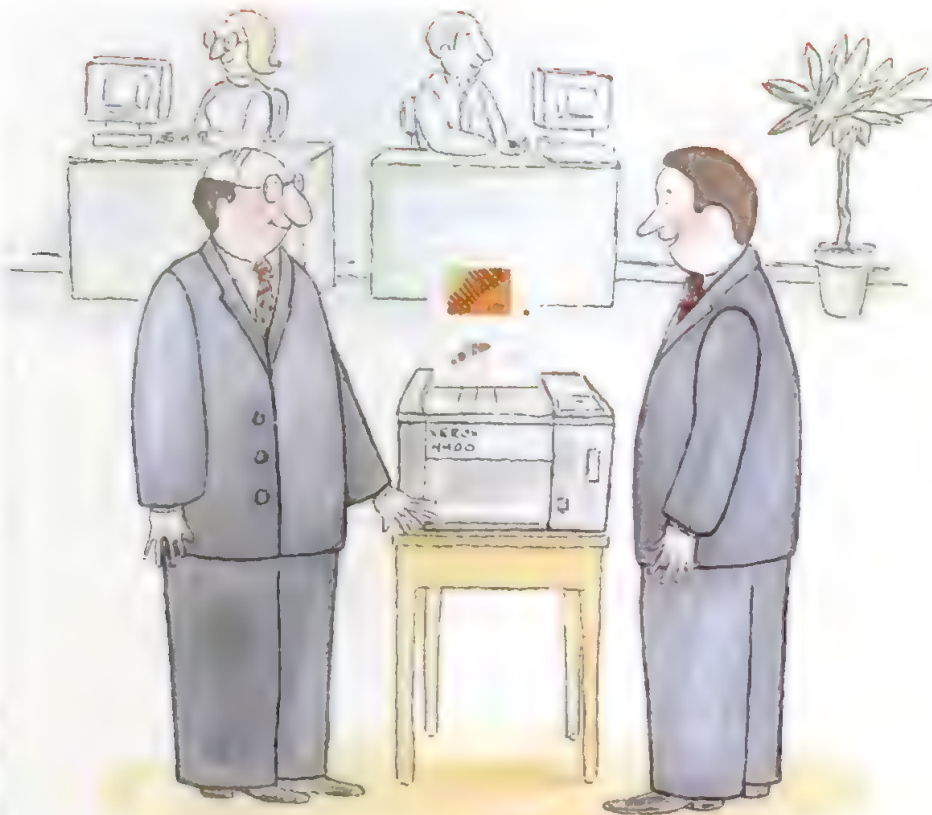
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Utilities

BY NEIL J. RUBENKING AND CARL RANKLIN

GUIToons Liven's Up Your Screen

In the olden days, screen savers did what their name suggests: protected monochrome monitors from screen burn-in. These days, the main goal of a Windows screen saver is to provide a pleasant way to personalize your computer or to password-protect your machine while you're away from your desk. This issue's free utility, GUIToons, is a special sort of screen saver because it lets you create an animation by supplying your own bitmaps. Otherwise, GUIToons works like any other screen saver. When a specified period of time elapses without any keyboard or mouse activity, Windows loads GUIToons and begins animating. When someone presses a key or moves the mouse, GUIToons restores the PC to its prior state.

GUIToons was written in Microsoft Visual Basic 3.0 (VB3). You can obtain GUIToons and its source code at no charge by downloading the files from *PC Magazine's* ZiffNet or by mail. Refer to the sidebar "Guide to Our Utilities & How To Get Them" for the details.

USING GUITOONS GUIToons is a standard Windows screen saver. You configure and test GUIToons using the Desktop applet in the Windows Control Panel. To install GUIToons on your system, copy the program file GUITOONS.SCR to your Windows directory (usually C:\WINDOWS). If you do not have VB3 on your system, you will also need to copy VBRUN300.DLL and CMDIALOG.VBX to your Windows System directory (usually C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM).

When the GUIToons screen saver is activated, bitmaps you selected during configuration are displayed in a series and moved around on the screen, giving the appearance of animation. The screen can be

cleared to black before the animation begins, or you can leave it as is. If the screen is not cleared, the animation will be superimposed over the current background.

To bring up GUIToons' Setup window, follow these steps. Launch the Desktop applet in the Control Panel window, select GUIToons from the list of screen savers, and then click the Setup button. GUIToons' Setup window is shown in Figure 1.

You select the bitmap files for the animation in the Setup window. The bitmaps must be in the Windows bitmap (.BMP) format. GUIToons creates the animation by displaying the bitmaps sequentially. The bitmaps are displayed first in forward order, then backward order, and then forward again in a continuing pattern. For example, if you had three bitmaps, they would be displayed like this:

1, 2, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 2...

Top 10 Utilities	
Rank	Utility
1	FDDLLS - Finds dead DLLs
2	FINDIRQ - IRQ line analysis
3	WTIME - Keeps PC clock accurate
4	INCTRL - Controls Windows installation
5	MYGRPS - Customizes group icons
6	WINGMD - Command file interpreter
7	BUGS - Windows 3.1 screen saver
8	PLICON - Places program icons
9	SCHEDULER - Runs programs automatically
10	PASTE - Enhanced Windows clipboard
This list is based on the total number of downloads each utility has had on PC MagNet over the past month. To download these files, type GO ZNT:TIPS. For more information, see the sidebar "Guide to Our Utilities & How to Get Them."	

The best types of bitmaps are those that comprise half of a complete movement. For example, you could have the face of a man opening his mouth in three bitmaps: closed, half-open, and open. When the sequence is animated the mouth will appear to open and close over and over again.

Select the bitmaps you want by clicking the Add button. A Windows common dialog box will appear in which you can select the .BMP files you wish to use in your animation. If you select just one file, GUIToons will simply move the picture around on the screen with no animation. This can create an interesting effect with certain bitmaps. For example, you might want to try it with the Windows logo file, WINLOGO.BMP, stored in the Windows Directory.

To select more than one bitmap file at a time, drag the left mouse button, or hold down the Ctrl key and click on more than one file. The Setup screen also contains buttons to clear the list of files and delete the highlighted file from the list. If the Insert check box is checked, bitmaps you add will be inserted before the highlighted item in the list.

GUIToons also gives you control over other aspects of the animation. The Animation Speed slider lets you control the time interval between animation frames. Positioning the slider all the way to the left (slow) results in the longest interval between frames; positioning the slider all the way to the right (fast) results in the minimum interval between frames. Positioning the slider between these two extremes lets you fine-tune animation speed. If the animation appears choppy, try increasing the animation speed.

The Screen Movement slider controls how much the position of each frame differs from that of the previous frame. Moving the slider to the left decreases the movement; moving it to the right increases the movement. The maximum movement is 50 pixels; the minimum movement is 1 pixel.

The Background options determine what happens to the underlying screen when the screen saver kicks in. If you would like to clear the underlying screen, select Clear. If you want the screen to remain as it is, select Leave Alone. If the screen is not cleared, the animation will

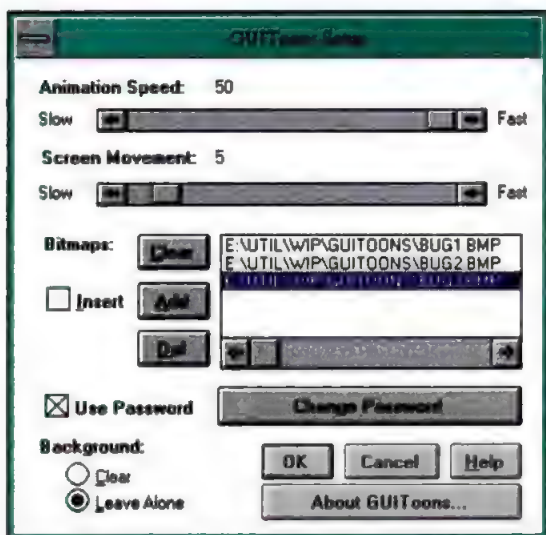


Figure 1: GUIToons' setup screen lets you select which bitmaps to use, and set animation speed, screen movement speed, and other options.

be superimposed over the background.

GUIToons includes optional password protection. When you supply a password (see Figure 2), it is encrypted and saved to disk. To change the password, you must know the existing password.

When the screen saver animation is terminated with a mouse movement or a key press, a dialog box pops up and asks for the password (see Figure 3). Without the correct password, the screen saver will not end, and the user is locked out of the computer.

If you forget your password, edit the CONTROL.INI file and find the [Screen-Saver] section. Delete the line that begins

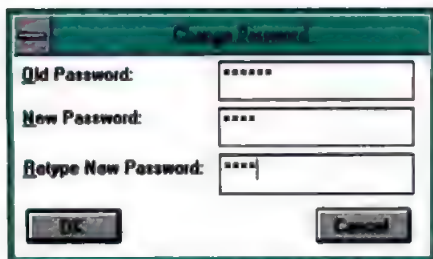


Figure 2: GUIToons includes optional password protection. To change the password, you must know the existing password.

"Password=". Now you can respond to the dialog box requesting the password by simply pressing Enter, and you can set the password to whatever you want by leaving the Old Password line blank. Note that anyone can bypass GUI-

Toons's password protection by doing this, so don't count on your screen saver to provide infallible security.

When you click on the Test button, you will see the result of the settings you have chosen. You may notice a delay after clicking Test before the screen saver kicks in. GUIToons is slow to load because it was written in Visual Basic. Visual Basic speeds development time for programmers, but the programs themselves execute more slowly than programs written in true compiled programming languages.

MAKING SCREEN SAVERS WITH VB Only two steps are needed to make a VB screen saver program accessible from the Windows Control Panel. First, you must save the executable file with an .SCR extension instead of the default .EXE extension. Second, you must give the application description a prefix of "SCRNSAVE:". In this case, the application title is "SCRNSAVE:GUIToons". You take care of both tasks in the dialog box that appears when you select Make EXE File... from VB's file menu.

The Desktop applet in the Windows Control Panel contains a section for screen savers which includes a Setup button and a Test button. When a user clicks the Setup button, the Control Panel runs the screen saver with the /c command line switch. As shown below, GUIToons looks at the command line argument in the Form_Load procedure, and displays the Setup form if /c is specified:

```
If InStr(Command$, "/c") Then
    frmSetup.Show 1
    Me.Visible = False
    Exit Sub
End If
```

If you are running GUIToons from within VB and wish to access the Setup screen, set the "Command Line Argument" project option to "/c" (without the quotes).

When the user clicks the Test button, the screen saver is run with the command line argument /s. This switch is also used

when Windows loads GUIToons as a result of keyboard and mouse inactivity.

INSIDE GUITOONS To produce animation, GUIToons quickly displays the bitmaps one after another to give the illusion of movement. This is similar to old-fashioned flip books, where each page is a still image and flipping the pages quickly makes the image appear to move.

You might think this could be implemented by moving picture controls around on the screen. That would work, but only against a solid-color background. For example, you could take a bitmap of a red circle on a black background and move it around on a black screen without much trouble. But what if the screen has a picture on it? The picture control will show a solid rectangle around the image, which is unacceptable. If you want to animate a bitmap on a background with an image, you cannot rely solely on picture controls.

The key to displaying a bitmap image on a nonsolid background is a technique called *masking*. Simply put, a mask is a silhouette of the image where the image it-



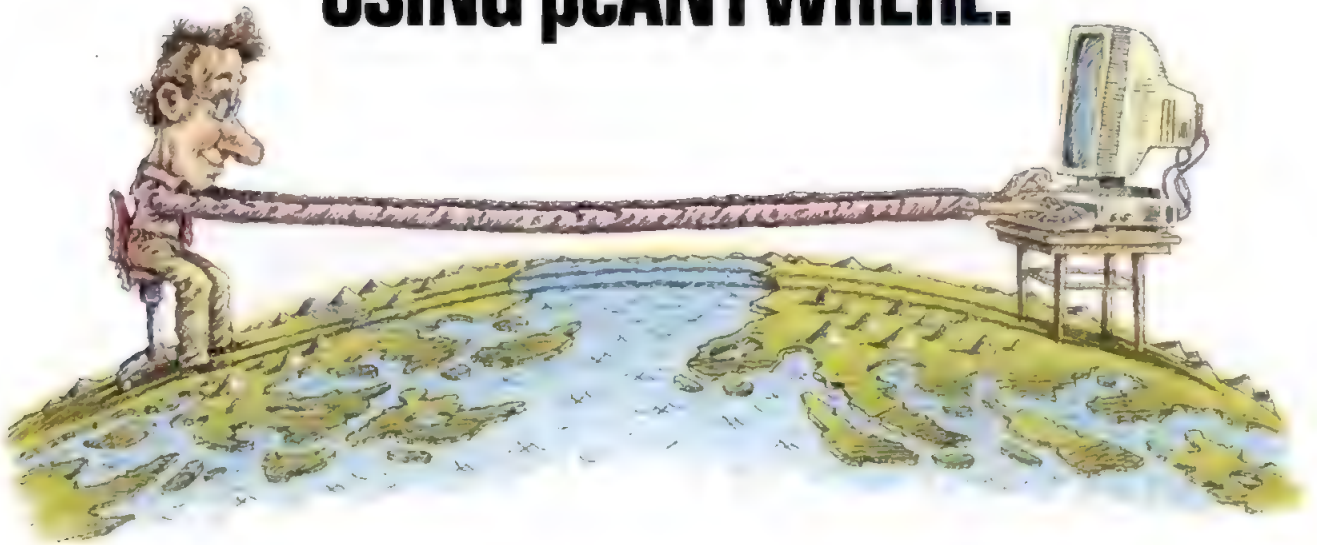
Figure 3: When using GUIToons with password protection, you must enter the correct password to terminate the screen saver.

self is black, and the background (which we want to make transparent) is white. The top three images in Figure 4 show a foreground bitmap, the corresponding mask, and an example background. The bottom row shows three stages in the masking process that superimposes the image onto the background.

The secret to transparent background animation is in the way the mask is combined with the picture and the background. We use a memory device context (DC) for a workspace, and start by copying the background to the workspace. Figure 4c represents this step.

The next step is to combine the foreground image with the workspace, which

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currently contains the background image, using the SRCINVERT operation. The SRCINVERT operation combines images pixel by pixel using the XOR operator, so that corresponding

workspace image using SRCINVERT again. It seems like magic, but as Figure 4f shows, this results in the foreground image being drawn in the area where it was previously silhouetted. This happens

because of two properties of the XOR operator. If you XOR value B with value A and then XOR value B again with the result, you get back value A. This explains why the background outside the mask silhouette is unchanged; it was XORed twice with the same portion of the foreground image. If you XOR any value with 0 (black), the result is the original value, unchanged. The foreground of the image is XORed with the black silhouette, so it comes through unchanged.

GUIToons uses the VB picture control to create memory DCs (device contexts) by setting the AutoRedraw property

to True and the Visible property to False. The Windows API function BitBlt (pronounced "bit-bliit" and standing for *bit block transfer*) is used to combine the images and create each frame of the animation (see Figure 5). BitBlt's first argument is the handle of the target device context. The next two arguments are the x and y positions where the image will be drawn. The fourth and fifth arguments represent

the size of the image—its width and height. The sixth, seventh, and eighth arguments are the source DC, and the x and y offset from which to copy.

The last argument in BitBlt is a constant, defined by the Windows API, that says how to copy the bitmap. The constant SRCCOPY tells BitBlt to copy the source to the destination without modification of any kind. The constant NOTSRCCOPY tells BitBlt to copy the source to the destination but invert the bits. The constant SRCINVERT is used to XOR bitmaps; SRCAND is used to AND bitmaps. Other binary operators are available as well, but these are the ones used by GUIToons.

This complicated masking process can be simplified when GUIToons has been told to clear the screen. As Figure 5 shows, if the variable ClearScreen is True, only three BitBlt operations are needed. The first copies the mask to the workspace using NOTSRCCOPY, which results in a mask with the image in white and the background in black. The second ANDs the image with this mask, yielding the foreground image with a black background. The third BitBlt, used whether or not the screen was cleared, copies the workspace to the display.

WHEN GUITOONS KICKS IN All of GUIToons's setup code is contained in the Form_Load event procedure. This code loads the bitmap files, initializes key vari-

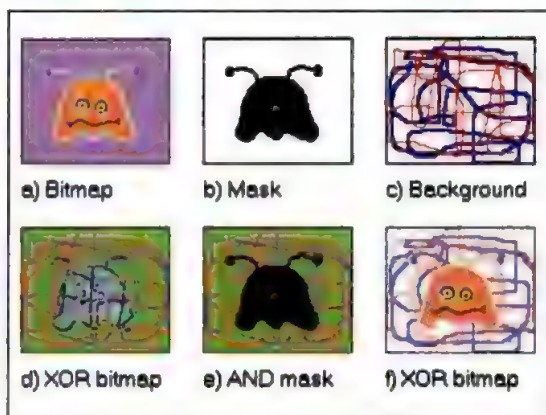


Figure 4: The pictures in the top row show the foreground image, the image mask, and a background image. Those in the bottom row show the image XORed with the background, the mask ANDed with the background, and the image XORed with the background again.

bits in a pixel's color become a 1 if there is a 1-bit in *either* of the images, but *not both*. As you can see in Figure 4d, the resulting image is different from either the foreground or the background, but contains elements of both.

Then the mask is copied to the workspace using the SRCAND operation. With SRCAND, the pixel colors from the two images are combined using the AND operator. The corresponding bits from the two pixels must both be 1 for the resulting pixel to contain a 1-bit in that location. The results, as shown in Figure 4e, are predictable because of the way the mask is constructed: The black silhouette of the image is all 0-bits and the white background is all 1-bits. The background image will stay exactly the same—bits that are on will stay on, and bits that are off will stay off. The bits in the foreground image, on the other hand, will all be turned off. The result will be a black silhouette of the image superimposed on the background image.

The last step is to combine the foreground image with the

```
'-- Draw the next Frame at the next x and y coordinates

If ClearScreen% Then

    '-- Copy the mask to the workspace, exchanging white and black
    Success = BitBlt(WorkDC, 0, 0, bWidth, bHeight, DC(Frame).IntMaskDC, 0, 0, NOTSRCCOPY)

    '-- Copy the bitmap to the workspace with AND
    Success = BitBlt(WorkDC, 0, 0, bWidth, bHeight, DC(Frame).IntPicDC, 0, 0, SRCAND)

Else

    '-- Copy the target area from picScreenCap to picWorkspace
    Success = BitBlt(WorkDC, 0, 0, bWidth, bHeight, ScreenCapDC, X, Y, SRCCOPY)

    '-- Copy the bitmap from picPicture to picWorkSpace with XOR
    Success = BitBlt(WorkDC, 0, 0, bWidth, bHeight, DC(Frame).IntPicDC, 0, 0, SRCINVERT)

    '-- Copy the mask from the Mask DC to picWorkSpace with AND
    Success = BitBlt(WorkDC, 0, 0, bWidth, bHeight, DC(Frame).IntMaskDC, 0, 0, SRCAND)

    '-- Copy the bitmap again to picWorkSpace with XOR
    Success = BitBlt(WorkDC, 0, 0, bWidth, bHeight, DC(Frame).IntPicDC, 0, 0, SRCINVERT)

End If

'-- Copy the entire frame from picWorkspace to the Display (main form).
Success = BitBlt(DisplayDC, X, Y, bWidth, bHeight, WorkDC, 0, 0, SRCCOPY)
```

Figure 5: The code shown here uses the masking technique to combine the images and create the superimposed foreground image.





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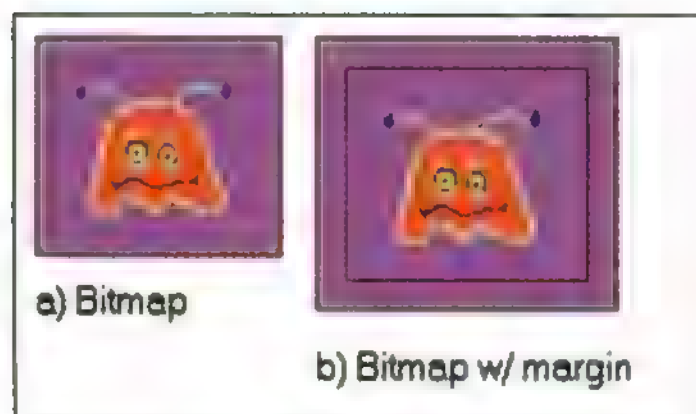


Figure 6: The extra margin around the image represents the maximum screen movement, which is set in the setup window.

ables, creates the masks, and gets everything ready to be animated.

First, GUIToons' user settings are read from the CONTROL.INI file. This includes the number of bitmaps, the bitmap file names, and whether the screen should be cleared or left alone. The password is saved to CONTROL.INI under the heading [ScreenSaver]; the settings specific to GUIToons are saved in CONTROL.INI under the heading [Screen Saver.GUIToons]. For the options selected in Figure 1, the WIN.INI section looks like this:

```
[ScreenSaver]
Password=hUzn^.
```

```
[Screen Saver.GUIToons]
Bitmap1=E:\UTIL\WIP\GUITOONS\BUG1.BMP
Bitmap2=E:\UTIL\WIP\GUITOONS\BUG2.BMP
Bitmap3=E:\UTIL\WIP\GUITOONS\BUG3.BMP
Interval=1
```

```
Static Frame, Direction, X, Y, BeenHere

If BeenHere = False Then
    '-- Initialize (first time only)
    Frame = 0 '-- Frame is the frame number
    X = -MoveSpeed '-- Remember MoveSpeed = Margin
    Y = -MoveSpeed
    Direction = True '-- True = Foreward, False = Backwards
    BeenHere = True
End If

'-- Pick the next bitmap. The bitmaps are
'circulated {0,1,2,3,4,3,2,1,REPEAT}

If Direction Then '-- Foreward
    If Frame < NumBitmaps - 1 Then
        Frame = Frame + 1
        If Frame > NumBitmaps - 1 Then Frame = 0
    Else
        Direction = False
        Frame = Frame - 1
        If Frame = -1 Then Frame = 0
    End If
Else '-- Backwards
    If Frame > 0 Then
        Frame = Frame - 1
        If Frame = -1 Then Frame = 0
    Else
        Direction = True
        Frame = Frame + 1
        If Frame > NumBitmaps - 1 Then Frame = 0
    End If
End If
```

```
MoveSpeed=5
NumBitmaps=3
PWProtected=1
ClearScreen=0
```

Next, the bitmaps are loaded into the picLoader picture control and copied into the picPicture() control array. The background color of each picPicture box is set to the same color as the picture's background, which is sampled by checking the color of the top-left pixel. This ensures that the background will be white in the monochrome-mask bitmap. Note that if the pixel in the top-left corner is not the background color you want, you'll have to load the bitmap into PaintBrush and change the color of that pixel.

When the bitmap is copied from picLoader into picPicture, an extra margin is left around it (see Figure 6). The size of this margin depends on the amount of movement between frames, defined in terms of pixels, which is set in the setup window.

Say, for example, the user has set the Screen Movement slider so that the maximum number of pixels to move is 10. In this case, picPicture is created 20 pixels wider and 20 pixels higher than the original bitmap, which is then copied to pixel location (10, 10), leaving a 10-pixel margin on every side.

When a new frame is displayed on the screen, it covers up the frame that was there before. (Each frame is a square con-

taining the picture against the background.) By defining a margin equal to the number of pixels that the animation can move between frames, we ensure that each frame will cover all traces of the previous frame.

Once all of the .BMP files are loaded, the masks are created. Next GUIToons checks if you want the background screen left alone. If so, the entire screen is captured and copied to the DC of the main form, called the DisplayDC, so it can be used as the background for the animation. Then when GUIToons is activated, the main form—a screenshot of your display—fills the screen.

ANIMATING THE BITMAPS A VB Timer control is used to trigger the animation. The Timer control fires an event at the interval determined by the Animation Speed setting in the Setup screen. If Animation Speed is set to 50 (the fastest), the timer interval is set to 1 timer tick (about 55 milliseconds); if it's set to 1 (the slowest), the timer interval is 50 timer ticks. It is in the Timer-event procedure that each frame is constructed and displayed.

The setup code in the Timer1_Timer event procedure (see Figure 7) keeps track of the direction in which the bitmaps are cycling and picks the next bitmap number to be displayed. Once the bitmap has been determined, GUIToons calculates new coordinates by adding the variables Movex and Movey

```
'-- Pick an X coordinate for the bitmap
X = X + MoveX
Do
    If X >= pixWidth - bWidth + MoveSpeed Then
        ResetMoveX -1
        X = X + MoveX
    ElseIf X <= -MoveSpeed Then
        ResetMoveX 1
        X = X + MoveX
    Else
        Exit Do
    End If
    DoEvents
Loop

'-- Pick a Y coordinate for the bitmap
Y = Y + MoveY
Do
    If Y >= pixHeight - bHeight + MoveSpeed Then
        ResetMoveY -1
        Y = Y + MoveY
    ElseIf Y <= -MoveSpeed Then
        ResetMoveY 1
        Y = Y + MoveY
    Else
        Exit Do
    End If
    DoEvents
Loop
```



Figure 7: This code keeps track of the direction in which the bitmaps are cycling and picks the next bitmap number to be displayed.



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```
Sub EncryptString (Source$)
' Encrypt a string the same way the standard screen saver
' library does it. The result is based on the XOR operation,
' but it's guaranteed to produce a string containing
' valid characters (no control characters, no nonprintable
' characters, and so on)
Dim Strg$, StrgLg%, StrgPt%, TheByte%

StrgLg = Len(Source$)
If StrgLg = 0 Then Exit Sub
' Convert string to uppercase
Strg = UCase$(Source$)

' Process characters from first to last
For StrgPt = 0 To StrgLg - 1
TheByte = Asc(Mid$(Strg, StrgPt + 1, 1))
EXor StrgLg, TheByte 'Xor byte with password length
If StrgPt = 0 Then
EXor &H2A, TheByte 'Xor first byte with constant
Else
EXor StrgPt, TheByte 'Xor with position
EXor Asc(Mid$(Strg, StrgPt, 1)), TheByte 'Xor with prev char
End If
Mid$(Strg, StrgPt + 1, 1) = Chr$(TheByte)
Next
```

```
If StrgLg = 1 Then Exit Sub

' Process characters from last to first
For StrgPt = StrgLg - 1 To 0 Step -1
TheByte = Asc(Mid$(Strg, StrgPt + 1, 1))
EXor StrgLg, TheByte 'Xor byte with password length
If StrgPt = StrgLg - 1 Then
EXor &H2A, TheByte 'Xor first byte with constant
Else
EXor StrgPt, TheByte 'Xor with position
EXor Asc(Mid$(Strg, StrgPt + 2, 1)), TheByte 'Xor with next char
End If
Mid$(Strg, StrgPt + 1, 1) = Chr$(TheByte)
Next
Source$ = Strg
End Sub

Sub EXor (X1, X2)
Select Case X2 Xor X1
Case &H0 To &H2F, &H7F To &H9F, &H93 To &H9F, &H3D, &H5B, &H5D
Case Else
X2 = X2 Xor X1
End Select
End Sub
```



Figure 8: GUIToons has to encrypt password strings without help from the Windows screen-saver object library; this code does the job.

to the *x* and *y* coordinates.

Every time the animation hits an edge of the screen, a new Move value is calculated for the direction in which it was moving when it hit the boundary. The ResetMovex and ResetMovey routines set Movex and Movey to this random number. The effect is that the animation appears to bounce off the sides of the screen and pick a new direction when the edge is encountered.

Once the frame and direction are selected, the five BitBlt steps shown in Figure 5 (three steps if the screen was cleared) are executed. This occurs once on every timer event until a key is pressed or the mouse is moved or clicked.

MOUSE AND KEYBOARD HANDLING

When the mouse is moved over the main form, the Form_MouseMove event is fired. The MouseMove event is fired once when the form is first displayed, and again every time the mouse is moved. Therefore, as shown below, GUIToons waits until the second mouse movement before it exits:

```
Sub Form_MouseMove (...)
If JustAMoment Then Exit Sub
Static Once
If Once Then
Unload Me
Once = False
Else
Once = True
End If
End Sub
```

When a key is pressed, the Form_Key-

Press event is fired. Unlike MouseMove, this event does not occur when the program loads, so the screen saver exits when the first keypress is detected. Here is the code to respond to a keypress event; mouse clicks are handled in exactly the same way.

```
Sub Form_KeyPress (KeyAscii%)
If Not JustAMoment Then Unload Me
End Sub
```

The variable JustAMoment serves to "debounce" the screen saver. If you cancel the password-entry form by pressing Esc or clicking the Cancel button, the form will reappear immediately without JustAMoment. GUIToons sets JustAMoment to True when the password-entry form closes, and False when the timer ticks next.

Some clean-up code is also needed in the main form's Form_Unload event procedure. The mask bitmaps and DCs must be destroyed, and the Screen DC must also be destroyed. All of a Windows program's resources must be freed before it ends, otherwise unreleased memory will cause problems if the screen saver is run repeatedly.

A proper screen saver will hide the mouse cursor when it runs and redisplay it when it exits. To do this you must call the ShowCursor function, which is part of the Windows API. Here is the syntax for declaring this function:

```
Declare Function ShowCursor% Lib
"User" (ByVal bShow%)
```

To show the mouse, simply call ShowCursor with bShow set to True. Hiding the mouse cursor requires a little extra code because of the quirky manner in which the mouse cursor is handled. If ShowCursor is called twice with a value of True, then one call to ShowCursor with a value of False will not hide the cursor. Instead, two calls will be needed. To reliably hide the cursor you can use this HideCursor routine:

```
Sub HideCursor ()
Do
Loop Until ShowCursor(False) = True
End Sub
```

PASSWORD PROTECTION Screen savers written in C or C++ can link in a standard screen-saver object library and get automatic access to password encryption. A Visual Basic program like GUIToons has to perform the encryption itself. The EncryptString function in PASSWORD.BAS (see Figure 8) does the job, using the standard Windows encryption algorithm. Note that at no time does GUIToons decrypt your screen-saver password. All it has to do is encrypt the password you entered and see if it results in the same encrypted string as the stored password.

The encryption scheme used by screen savers is based on the simple XOR operation with a twist, implemented as the EXor subroutine. EXor's first parameter can be any number from 0 to 255; its second (a byte from the password string) must be a number that cor-

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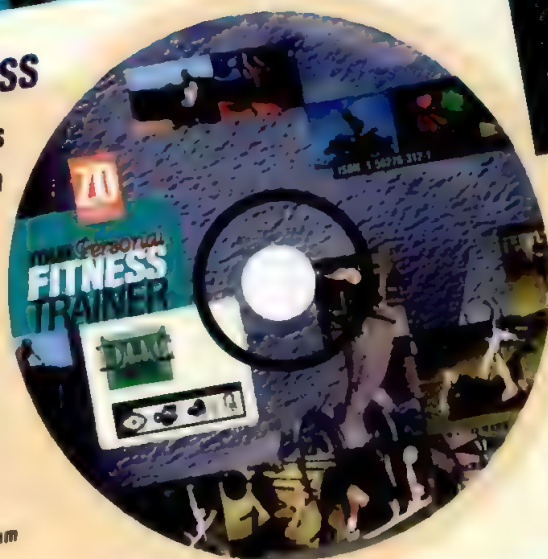
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responds to a printable ASCII character. These two parameters are XORed. If the result is the ASCII value of a character that is valid for use as part of a key value in an .INI file, EXor replaces the second parameter—the byte from the password string—with that number. If the result would be invalid (a control character, a nonprintable character, or an equal sign, for example), EXor leaves

the second parameter unchanged.

EncryptString steps through an uppercase copy of the password string one character at a time, from left to right. It calls EXor to combine the character with the password length, the character's position within the string, and the next character. If the password is more than one character long, EncryptString processes the string again from right to left.

GUIToons gives you the ability to create your own animations, and in the process demonstrates some interesting programming techniques. It was fun to write and fun to write about—we hope you find it fun to use. □

NEIL J. RUBENKING IS TECHNICAL EDITOR OF PC MAGAZINE. CARL RANKLIN IS A COMPUTER PROGRAMMER.

GUIDE TO OUR UTILITIES & HOW TO GET THEM

GUIToons

PURPOSE: GUIToons is a Windows screen saver written in Visual Basic. Unlike most screen savers, GUIToons lets you specify which image files to use for display or animation.

USAGE: To install GUIToons, copy GUITOONS.SCR to your Windows directory (usually C:\WINDOWS). If you don't have Visual Basic 3.0 on your system, then you must also copy VBRUN300.DLL and CMDIALOG.VBX to your Windows System directory (usually C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM).

GUIToons' Setup window is accessed via the Windows Control Panel's Desktop applet. Select GUIToons from the list of screen savers, and then click the Setup button. Select the bitmap file(s) to be used for animation by clicking the Add button.

The Animation Speed slider lets you control how fast the frames are displayed. The Screen Movement slider lets you set how quickly the animated bitmaps move about the screen. With the Background option, you can tell GUIToons to clear the screen before animating or leave it alone. Password protection is optional.

FILES: GUITN.DOC is just the documentation file for GUIToons. GUITN.ZIP contains just the files necessary to run the GUIToons screen saver: the .SCR and .BMP files. GUITSC.ZIP contains all of GUIToons' source code as well as the program files.

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Shine Your CDs

✓**TIP** One of the reasons I upgraded to a Pentium system was the horribly slow and inconsistent performance I was getting with CD-ROM games. Imagine my surprise when I played my favorite game on my new computer and found that the video was stuttering and stopping and the vocals often were out of synch. I checked thoroughly for hardware or software conflicts, but could find none.

On a whim, I carefully checked the data side of the CD-ROM and found several small, almost imperceptible smudges. I didn't think these could make a difference, but I carefully cleaned the CD with a soft cotton cloth and restarted the game. It ran beautifully; the video was smooth, animation and visual sweeps were fluid, and the vocals integrated perfectly. This is hard to believe, but my state-of-the-art technology was brought to its knees by a simple fingerprint.

*Dan Wuthrich
Seattle, Washington*

►**PC MAGAZINE:** Mr. Wuthrich's experience is one of the strongest arguments for CD-ROM caddies, those plastic packages that everyone loves to hate. If you can take a CD out of its jewel case (or as is becoming more and more common, its environmentally friendly cardboard sleeve) and plop it immediately into a caddy where it will remain untouched by human hands, you are far less likely to run into this problem.

If your CD-ROM drive is a caddy-less model, or if you don't have enough caddies for all the CDs you use frequently (and I never seem to have enough!), then you need to remember a few important tips about handling CDs.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that the data is on the shiny side, not the side with the label. If you have to put a naked disk down on a surface, put it label-side down. That way you are less likely to scratch or mar the data side. It's amazing how often I've seen people who should know better ignore this simple fact.

Next, don't stack unprotected CDs. If you don't have enough jewel cases or caddies for your disks, use the Tyvek disk sleeves or vinyl holders from old 5.25-inch floppy disks. I have an old disk wallet with vinyl pockets that I use to hold my seldom-used and caseless CDs.

Finally, if in spite of being careful to hold them only by their edges, you do get some dirt or a fingerprint on the data surface, don't just grab a paper towel and start scrubbing away. Use only soft, lint-free cloth or cleaning pads. Most stereo and music stores carry cleaning kits for audio CDs that will work just as well for data CDs.—*Alfred Poor*

Mouse Mayhem

❓ Every time I turn on my computer, it interferes with TV reception on some channels. The TV is hooked up to a tower antenna (it's not a cable system), and the

problem appears to be RF (radio frequency) interference. On the advice of folks on the Utilities/Tips Forum on ZiffNet (GO ZNT:TIPS), I tried disconnecting everything and plugging my peripherals back in one at a time. The problem reappeared only when the mouse was connected. It's admittedly an inexpensive clone, but can this mouse really be the problem?

*Karl Paetow
Vaudreuil, Quebec, Canada*

►**PC MAGAZINE:** It is indeed possible, and the fact that your mouse is an inexpensive model deepens my suspicion.

When you send fluctuating currents through a wire, the wire becomes a broadcast antenna for electromagnetic radiation. A good mouse cable will be sufficiently shielded to trap these emissions. An inexpensive mouse may well have been assembled with cheap, unshielded wire. So replacing the mouse with a better-quality unit should take care of the problem.

Incidentally, the emissions from mouse and trackball cables are the reason some airlines have prohibited the in-flight use of any device attached to a laptop. Notebooks with integrated trackballs or other pointing devices are more likely to

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PC DIRECT
starts here
with
exciting
offers from
top direct
vendors.

See index, page 304.

Sowing The Seeds Of Quality



Kind Value



Let's talk about a place called Home... The place you'd rather be when you're stuck at the office... A home that flies by and every moment counts... Where compromise is killing and majority rules... Where dreams are born and the sound of laughter never dies...

—U.E., we won't bore you with flowery phrases. But you've got to admit, your home is a pretty special place. So why settle for anything less from the computer you put in it?

Water, Sunshine And A Whole lotta Software.

That's how our garden of Home PCs grows. We start by planting in the PCI — giving you the fastest performance ever possible. Now we add hot IntelDX2™, Intel DX1™ and Pentium™ processors for blazing clock speeds and performance that rocks. Then, just as these systems are starting to sprout, we give them double- and quad-speed CD-ROM drives. And now we've got a green thumb for this multimedia thing... we also give the rock Home PC with some of your favorite Microsoft® software.

And While We're On The Subject...

Don't you just love software? Well, Home is a whole lot of help to make an ordinary computer bloom into a prize-winning PC. If you think about it, software is almost like a fertilizer for your system... except it smells a lot better. So, what kind of software goes on our Home PC? — We thought you'd better add the Microsoft Family Bundle (a valuable bouquet of interactive programs. You'll just love digging into CD-ROM titles like Encarta™, Works, Money, Scenes, Dangerous Creatures and Wild. But before you get your hands too dirty — check out some of the other goodies we've planted!

Enjoy Multimedia In Your Own Back Yard

It doesn't take long to realize the real beauty is deeply rooted in these Home PCs. In fact, depending on its configuration, your new power flower may be found sprouting out with a 32-voice variable sound card and Alice Lanning Speakers® (also, every Midwest Micro Home PC features a 0624 or 14.4 kb modem with V.90 mail that not only sends and receives at speeds up to 57,600 bps, but also acts as a personal answering machine — so you can keep the calls you don't want to miss... and ward off the ones you don't!

It's time to pick a PC called Home... The place you'd rather be when you're stuck at the office... A home that flies by and every moment counts... Where compromise is killing and majority rules... Where dreams are born and the sound of laughter never dies...



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Spruce Up Your Working

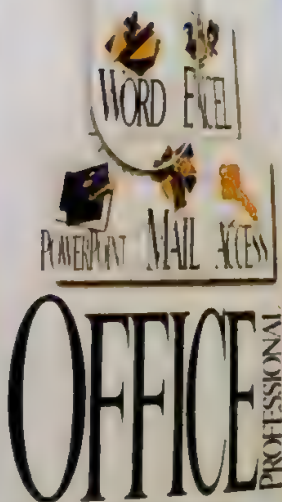


"It's darn fast and darn cheap."
— PC Computing, April 1995
"The Elite P5-90 is one of the fastest
computers we've tested."
— PC World, January 1995



Environment With An Office PC

Microsoft Office



*Let's face it, choosing a business computer is no picnic. That's why we offer a wide range of Office PCs with just the right tools for your business needs. And with one of these systems on **your** side of the fence, work may seem a little less like... **work!***

You Really Need To Get Out More...

And so you shall. Out of an "almost big enough" hard drive and into a roomy alternative. Out of your flimsy warranty program and into MidWest's Real 3 Year coverage. And *definitely* out of that "faster means too expensive" state of mind. We have no intentions of cramping your style. That's why we furnish our Office PCs with the biggest and best of absolutely everything! We're talking hard drive capacities up to 4.3 Gb, modem speeds up to 115,200 bps and enough business software to expand *anyone's* horizons! But before you think about expanding your *budget*, check out our down-to-earth PC prices.

Let's Skip The Formalities

You won't find any bugs in *these* high-performance systems. Every MidWest Micro Office PC features a 32-bit PCI Local Bus for sizzling video and peripheral output. And our *Pentium™* based Office PCs are *really* breaking new ground with 64-bit video accelerators, 75 MHz, 90 MHz, 100 MHz and 120 MHz processors — even 16 Mb of RAM and up! Who says a serious business computer has to be stuffy?

Find A Shady Spot And Get Back To Work

We guess you could say with an Office PC, your possibilities are **wide open**. Just choose your processor, hard drive, etc. and have a little fun. If a change of scenery sounds good to *you*, don't let the grass grow under your feet — call MidWest Micro and order an Office PC today.



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Systems

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Peripherals

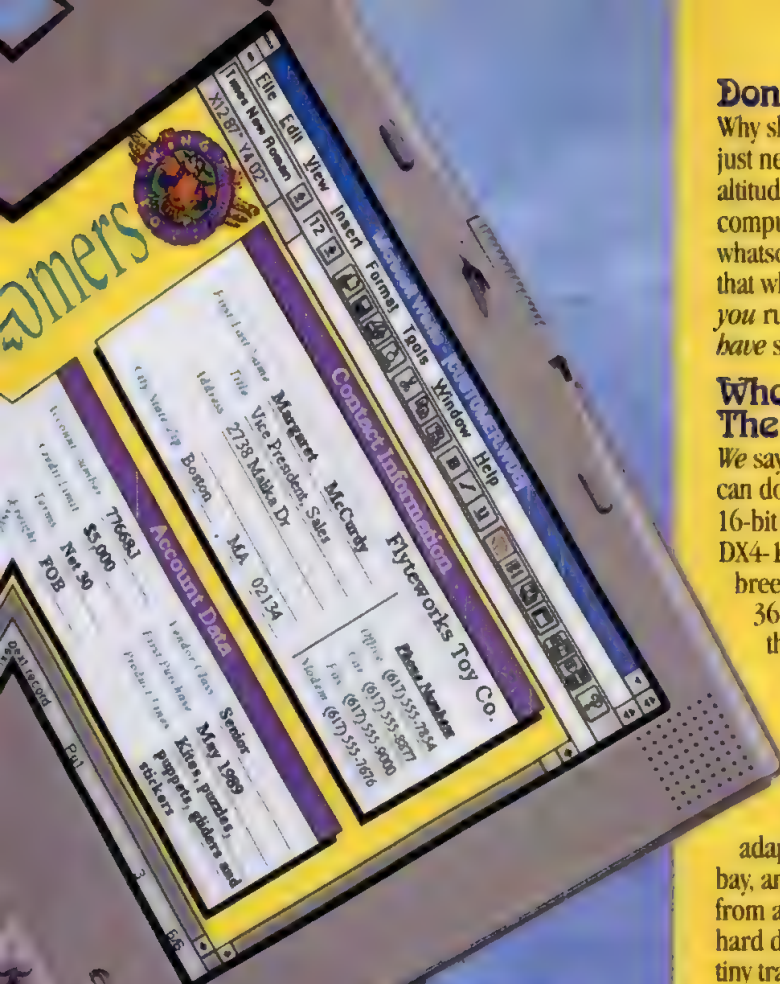
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"MidWest Micro wowed us with its Elite Pentium SoundBook Plus, the first Pentium-90 notebook we've tested; its performance blows every other reviewed mobile out of the water."
— PC World, March 1995

"...produced the highest Windstone 95 score of all reviewed systems."
— PC Magazine, January 1995



Don't...Look...Down...

Why should you? *You're moving up* in this fast-paced world. You just need a notebook computer designed for more demanding altitudes. One with so many advanced features, it raises mobile computing to brand new heights. A portable that has no problem whatsoever with clock-tripling speeds up to 100 MHz! A notebook that when left without an outlet in sight replies, "Ten bucks says *you* run out of energy before *I* do." ... Well it just so happens, we *have* such a notebook. We like to call it the SoundBook II.

Who Said Anything About The Sky Being The Limit?

We say there shouldn't *be* a limit to what your notebook computer can do! That's why we built the SoundBook II with plenty of ports, 16-bit stereo sound and lightning-fast Intel® processors up to DX4-100! Plus, two convenient RAM compartments make it a breeze to expand this SoundBook's 4 Mb memory to a lofty 36 Mb! And if you think *that* sounds cool, here's something that'll *really* blow your mind.

Winner: Most Congenial

Aside from this SoundBook's countless other talents, it also comes with Personality Modules. These compact peripherals pop in and out of the SoundBook II faster than you can say "My, how convenient!" Just plug your AC adapter or floppy drive into the SoundBook's universal drive bay, and say good-bye to bulky external components! Then choose from additional modules including a 3.5" CD-ROM drive, an extra hard drive and even an extra battery. Speaking of convenience, if tiny trackballs leave you at the end of your rope, you'll love this SoundBook's easy-to-use Personal TouchPad. With this touch-sensitive pointing device, your cursor will never get away from you again! ... But your new *notebook* just might — at 6 lbs. the SoundBook II is our lightest SoundBook yet!

Look What Else Just Blew In

Also defying the laws of gravity and speed is the SoundBook Plus based on Intel's Pentium™ Processor. This MidWest favorite features 75 MHz and 90 MHz Pentium Processors coupled with PCI Local Bus Video and hard drive control. And since all our notebooks now come with a three year parts and labor warranty, you're guaranteed our highest level of coverage — no matter which SoundBook you choose. For the best notebooks at the lowest prices, all you need to do is look *up*... our toll-free number, that is. (And since we put it on every page, that shouldn't be too hard.) Call MidWest Micro today — then get ready to grab your new SoundBook and run!



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Systems

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Peripherals

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MidWest Micro Home PCs

DX2-50 \$1499 #008740 ▶ IntelDX2™ 50 Processor ▶ 4 Mb RAM, 128 Kb Cache ▶ 545 Mb IDE Hard Drive ▶ PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface ▶ Double Speed CD-ROM Drive ▶ Microsoft® Family Bundle — Encarta™, Works, Money, Scenes, Dangerous Creatures & Golf ▶ Microsoft Complete Baseball CD ▶ 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card ▶ Digital Quality Speakers ▶ 9624 Fax Modem with VoiceMail ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP ▶ 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard ▶ Microsoft Mouse ▶ MS-DOS® 6.22 and WFW 3.11 ▶ EPA Energy Star Compliant ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty DX2-66 \$1599 #008741	DX4-100 \$1999 #008703 ▶ IntelDX4™ 100 Processor ▶ 8 Mb RAM, 128 Kb Cache ▶ 545 Mb IDE Hard Drive ▶ PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface ▶ Double Speed CD-ROM Drive ▶ Microsoft Family Bundle — Encarta, Works, Money, Scenes, Dangerous Creatures & Golf ▶ Microsoft Complete Baseball CD ▶ 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card ▶ Altec Lansing® Stereo Speakers ▶ 14.4 Fax Modem with VoiceMail ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP ▶ Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard ▶ Microsoft Mouse ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11 ▶ EPA Energy Star Compliant ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty DX4-75 \$1899 #008704	P5-75 \$2299 #008742 ▶ Intel® 75 Mhz Pentium™ Processor ▶ 8 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache ▶ 850 Mb IDE Hard Drive ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface ▶ PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb ▶ Quad Speed CD-ROM Drive ▶ Microsoft Family Bundle — Encarta, Works, Money, Scenes, Dangerous Creatures & Golf ▶ Microsoft Complete Baseball CD ▶ 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card ▶ Altec Lansing Stereo Speakers ▶ 14.4 Fax Modem with VoiceMail ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP ▶ Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard ▶ Microsoft Mouse ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11 ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty P5-60 \$2199 #008743	P5-90 \$2599 #008744 ▶ Intel 90 Mhz Pentium Processor ▶ 8 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache ▶ 850 Mb IDE Hard Drive ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface ▶ ATI® MACH 64 PCI Accelerator with 2 Mb ▶ Quad Speed CD-ROM Drive ▶ Microsoft Family Bundle — Encarta, Works, Money, Scenes, Dangerous Creatures & Golf ▶ Microsoft Complete Baseball CD ▶ 16-Bit Wavetable Sound Card ▶ Altec Lansing Stereo Speakers ▶ 14.4 Fax Modem with VoiceMail ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP ▶ Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard ▶ Microsoft Mouse ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11 ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty P5-100 \$2799 #008745
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P5-100 \$3499
 #008758
 ▶ Intel 100 Mhz Pentium Processor
 ▶ 16 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
 ▶ 1.2 Gb IDE Hard Drive
 ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface
 ▶ ATI MACH 64 PCI Accelerator
 with 2 Mb
 ▶ Quad Speed CD-ROM Drive

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MidWest Micro Office PCs

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MidWest Micro Office PCs (Continued)

DX4-100 PCI \$1999

- #008718
- ▶ Intel DX4-100 Processor
 - ▶ 8 Mb RAM, 128 Kb Cache
 - ▶ 850 Mb IDE Hard Drive
 - ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface
 - ▶ PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb
 - ▶ Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
 - ▶ 14.4 Fax Modem with Vocoder
 - ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive
 - ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor
 - ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
 - ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
 - ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP
 - ▶ Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
 - ▶ Microsoft Mouse
 - ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
 - ▶ MS Word 6.0, Bookshelf '94
 - ▶ Encarta Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
 - ▶ A Money 4
 - ▶ EPA Energy Star Compliant
 - ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

P5-75

- #008748
- ▶ Intel 75 MHz Pentium Processor
 - ▶ 8 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
 - ▶ 545 Mb IDE Hard Drive
 - ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface
 - ▶ PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb
 - ▶ Quad Speed CD-ROM Drive
 - ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive
 - ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor
 - ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
 - ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
 - ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP
 - ▶ Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
 - ▶ Microsoft Mouse
 - ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
 - ▶ MS Word 6.0, Bookshelf '94
 - ▶ Encarta Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
 - ▶ A Money 4
 - ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

\$1999

P5-75

- #008750
- ▶ Intel 75 MHz Pentium Processor
 - ▶ 16 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
 - ▶ 850 Mb IDE Hard Drive
 - ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface
 - ▶ PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb
 - ▶ ROM Drive
 - ▶ 14.4 Fax Modem with Vocoder
 - ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive
 - ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor
 - ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
 - ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
 - ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP
 - ▶ Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
 - ▶ Microsoft Mouse
 - ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
 - ▶ MS Word 6.0, Bookshelf '94
 - ▶ Encarta Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
 - ▶ A Money 3.0
 - ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

\$2399

P5-90

- #008751
- ▶ Intel 90 MHz Pentium Processor
 - ▶ 8 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
 - ▶ 545 Mb IDE Hard Drive
 - ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface
 - ▶ ATI MACH 64 PCI Accelerator with 2 Mb
 - ▶ Quad Speed CD-ROM Drive
 - ▶ 14.4 Fax Modem
 - ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive
 - ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor
 - ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
 - ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
 - ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP
 - ▶ Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
 - ▶ Microsoft Mouse
 - ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
 - ▶ MS Office Professional '94
 - ▶ A Money 3.0
 - ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

\$2499

P5-100

- #008752
- ▶ Intel 100 MHz Pentium Processor
 - ▶ 16 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
 - ▶ 1 Gb IDE Hard Drive
 - ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface
 - ▶ ATI MACH 64 PCI Accelerator with 2 Mb
 - ▶ Quad Speed CD-ROM Drive
 - ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive
 - ▶ 15" SVGA .28 Digital Color Monitor
 - ▶ 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
 - ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
 - ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP
 - ▶ Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
 - ▶ Microsoft Mouse
 - ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
 - ▶ MS Office Professional, Bookshelf '94
 - ▶ A Money 3.0
 - ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

\$2999

P5-100

- #008753
- ▶ Intel 100 MHz Pentium Processor
 - ▶ 16 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
 - ▶ 1 Gb IDE Hard Drive
 - ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface
 - ▶ ATI MACH 64 PCI Accelerator with 2 Mb
 - ▶ Quad Speed CD-ROM Drive
 - ▶ 14.4 Fax Modem with Vocoder
 - ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive
 - ▶ 17" .28 Digital Color Monitor
 - ▶ 10-Bay Full-Tower Case
 - ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
 - ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP
 - ▶ Microsoft Natural Keyboard
 - ▶ Microsoft Mouse
 - ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
 - ▶ MS Office Professional, Bookshelf '94
 - ▶ A Money 3.0
 - ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

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P5-100

- #008761
- ▶ Intel 100 MHz Pentium Processor
 - ▶ 16 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
 - ▶ 1.2 Gb IDE Hard Drive
 - ▶ PCI Fast IDE Interface
 - ▶ ATI MACH 64 PCI Accelerator with 2 Mb
 - ▶ Quad Speed CD-ROM Drive
 - ▶ 14.4 Fax Modem with Vocoder
 - ▶ 3.5" Disk Drive
 - ▶ 17" .26 1600 x 1200 ExactMatch Color Monitor
 - ▶ 10-Bay Full-Tower Case
 - ▶ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
 - ▶ Super I/O using 16550 UART & ECP/EPP
 - ▶ Microsoft Natural Keyboard
 - ▶ Microsoft Mouse
 - ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
 - ▶ MS Office Professional, Bookshelf '94
 - ▶ A Money 3.0
 - ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

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P5-90

- #008754
- ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

\$3199

P5-90

- #008762
- ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

\$3799

P5-120

- #008763
- ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

\$4299

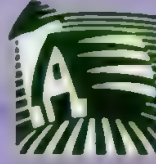
Monitor, Keyboard & CD-ROM Upgrades

Ask your sales representative how you can upgrade your monitor to a 17" or a 21" Monitor, your keyboard to a Microsoft Natural Keyboard, and your CD-ROM from a double speed to a quad speed.

- 15" to 17" \$205
- 15" to 17" ExactMatch \$309
- 17" to 21" ExactMatch \$609
- Double Speed to a Quad Speed CD-ROM \$49
- Microsoft Natural Keyboard \$59

Customizing Your System

If you don't see a system configuration which meets your needs, we'll be glad to customize a system for you. Choose your own case design, amount of RAM, hard drive size and other add-ons such as modems and multimedia kits.



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Systems

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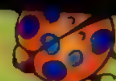
Peripherals

1-800-445-2794

AD#G05



MidWest Micro SoundBook Plus Based On Intel's Pentium™ Processor



- ▶ Intel® Pentium™ 90 or 75 MHz Processor
- ▶ 64-Bit 256K Synchronous Burst External Cache
- ▶ 64-Bit, 8 Mb RAM (expands to 40 Mb)
- ▶ 10.3" Dual-Scan or 10.4" Active-Matrix VGA Display
- ▶ PCI Local Bus Video with 1 Mb Video RAM
- ▶ PCI Local Bus HDD Controller

- ▶ 16-Bit Stereo Audio (Sound Blaster & Windows™ Sound System Compatible)
- ▶ Built-in Stereo Speakers & Microphone
- ▶ External Jacks for Line In & Line Out
- ▶ 3.5" Built-in Disk Drive
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- ▶ Two Type II/One Type III PCMCIA Slot
- ▶ Integrated Pointing Device
- ▶ NiMH Battery & AC Adapter
- ▶ Advanced Power Management
- ▶ Bi-directional Parallel Port
- ▶ High Speed 16550 UART Serial Port
- ▶ Infra Red Wireless IR™ Interface
- ▶ External VGA & Keyboard/Mouse Port
- ▶ MS-DOS® 6.22 & WFW 3.11
- ▶ Microsoft® Works for Windows 3.0 & Gold
- ▶ Lotus® Organizer
- ▶ Weight: 6.8 lbs
- ▶ Carrying Case
- ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty



* Ask your MidWest Micro sales representative about additional hard drive, screen and processor options



Flew!



- ▶ Intel 486™, IntelDX2™ or IntelDX4™ Processor with SMM Support
- ▶ Modular Design with Personal TV Module
- ▶ 1 Mb RAM (expands to 36 Mb)
- ▶ 10.3" Dual Scan or 10.2" Active-Matrix VGA Display
- ▶ Local Bus Video with 1 Mb Video RAM
- ▶ 16 Bit Audio Features Including Built-in Microphone & Stereo Speakers
- ▶ External Jacks for Line In & Line Out
- ▶ SoundBlaster & WSS compatible
- ▶ 3.5" Floppy Disk Drive

- ▶ Two Type II/One Type III PCMCIA Slot
- ▶ Personal TouchPad Integrated Pointing Device
- ▶ NiMH Battery & AC Adapter
- ▶ Advanced Power Management
- ▶ One Parallel & One Serial Port
- ▶ External VGA & Keyboard Port
- ▶ MS-DOS 6.22 & WFW 3.11
- ▶ Microsoft Works for Windows 3.0 & Gold
- ▶ Lotus Organizer
- ▶ Weight: 6.0 lbs
- ▶ Carrying Case
- ▶ The Real 3 Year Warranty

Options

Personality Modules—AC Adapter, Battery, 3.5" CD-ROM.....	C.M.I.
4 Mb RAM Card.....	#006381.....\$309
8 Mb RAM Card.....	#002558.....\$379
16 Mb RAM Card.....	#002559.....\$739
Mobile Max PCMCIA 130 Mb HDD.....	#004805.....\$289
Mobile Max PCMCIA 170 Mb HDD.....	#004806.....\$345
PCMCIA 14.4 Fax Modem.....	#002624.....\$129
PCMCIA Combo Ethernet Adapter.....	#001954.....\$139
Leather Carrying Case.....	#001515.....\$ 99

Dual-Scan Color

P5-75 with 340 Mb HDD	#008090	\$2999
P5-90 with 340 Mb HDD	#008029	\$3299
P5-90 with 520 Mb HDD	#008025	\$3499
P5-90 with 720 Mb HDD, 16 Mb of RAM & PCMCIA 14.4 Fax Modem	#008101	\$3999

Active-Matrix Color

P5-75 with 340 Mb HDD	#008091	\$3999
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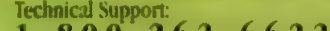
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be properly shielded, since they don't have cables dangling from their ports.

—Alfred Poor

Grappling with Upgrades

❓I have an older 386DX/25-based system with 8MB of RAM and a 200MB hard disk. Though I realize it's a dinosaur, I'm trying to extend its life long enough to skip a generation of PCs. I use Windows-based programs and was wondering if I'd get a significant performance boost by replacing my Trident-based VGA card with an accelerated card costing about \$120 to \$180.

Bill Rich
via ZiffNet

►PC MAGAZINE: You'll get more bang for your buck elsewhere than by going for an accelerated ISA card at this point. (And by my count, you've already skipped a few generations of PCs, though I can certainly understand your desire to keep your machine functioning a bit longer.)

The problem is that the ISA bus runs at 8 MHz and is only 16 bits wide. You can speed up the processing of data on the graphics adapter and pare down the data

stream flowing to the card through the use of an accelerator chip, but there are limits to the gains you can make in this way.

CPU power is cheap, and a faster CPU will affect all aspects of your system performance—not just the display. Assuming that you can use your existing components (memory, disk controller, and so forth), you can get a 486SX/33-based motherboard with VL-Bus expansion slots for less than \$150. You can get a local-bus SVGA card for about \$100. Thus for a bit more than the price of an accelerator card, you'll get a CPU running a third faster than you have now and a

path to the graphics adapter that is twice as wide and three times as fast as that of your current configuration.

Another advantage to this approach is that it gives you further relatively inexpensive yet effective upgrade options. You can replace the 486SX/33 with a 486DX2/66 for doubled CPU performance. Or you can add an accelerated VL-Bus graphics adapter or local-bus disk controller. By comparison, buying new components for a 386-based ISA-bus motherboard is a dead-end approach.

—Alfred Poor

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M. David Stone is a contributing editor and coauthor of *Word for Windows Companion*, Second Edition.

Ethan Winer is a contributing editor and the author of *PC Magazine BASIC Techniques and Utilities*.

Printing in Stereo

❓Whenever I print, the sound of my ink jet printer comes through the speakers attached to my sound card. It's so bad that I have to unplug them every time I print something. How can I stop this from happening?

John Thayer
via the Internet

►PC MAGAZINE: This sounds like a shielding problem: Your speakers are almost certainly self-powered and will amplify any weak signal that is picked up by the speaker wires. It is unlikely that the printer itself is the source of the interference, so focus on the cables as the first step toward a solution.

First and foremost, check to see how the cables are routed. Do not twist or tie the speaker and printer cables together as they leave the computer for their respective destinations. If possible, route the cables so that they do not go near each other.

Make certain that the printer cable is

solidly grounded at both ends. Use the connector clips at the printer end and the hand screws at the computer end to make sure that you have a firm connection.

If the problem persists, try replacing the printer cable or the speaker cables or both with better-quality cable that provides more thorough shielding.

—Alfred Poor

■ OPERATING ENVIRONMENTS

Keeping a DOS Box Open

❓I was under the impression that the "Close Window on Exit" check box in the Windows .PIF file editor serves the same purpose as loading COMMAND.COM (with or without /K) in a batch file run from Windows, as discussed in the Solutions column of January 25, 1994. Is this correct?

John Fitzpatrick
via ZiffNet

►PC MAGAZINE: The .PIF file editor's Close Window on Exit check box does nothing but control the status of a DOS

box's window after the application it contains has ended. If this item is checked, the DOS box will vanish when the program ends. If not, the DOS box will remain open but inactive, with the word "Inactive" prefixed to its window title. This is convenient if the program in question was a batch file or command-line utility: If the DOS box closed the moment the program ended, you might not get a chance to view the results.

When you run a batch file under Windows by specifying a command line of `COMMAND /K` followed by the batch file name, you will have a live DOS box after the batch file ends. You can run other programs or DOS commands, and the DOS box will remain open until you enter the EXIT command. Again, the benefit of this technique is that it gives you the opportunity to automatically load TSRs in just one DOS box. The alternative is to load your TSRs before starting Windows, in which case they will take away from the conventional memory available to all processes.

—Neil J. Rubenking

Creating an Invisible Icon

❓I'd like to know how to make a Windows icon invisible. My plan is this: Since Windows minimizes icons into the lower left corner of the screen, I'd still be able to locate an invisible Program Manager icon with a minimum of double-clicking. I could set up a Windows batch file to run the applications I want, and in between, no icons would appear on the screen to clutter up my customized wallpaper. Can you tell me how to create an icon that is completely transparent? I'd like the title to be transparent as well. This may be a little unconventional, but I'd like to do it.

Vernon Caswell
via ZiffNet

►PC MAGAZINE: Every Windows icon is rectangular, though many of them don't look that way. For example, Windows' Write icon is a pen drawing the letter A, and you can see the desktop background surrounding the pen. That's because the

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W
Q

```

Figure 1: When this script is redirected into DEBUG, it creates a Windows icon that's totally transparent.

background of the icon is defined as transparent. An invisible icon is simply one with every single pixel defined as transparent. Figure 1 is a DEBUG script, INVISIBL.SCR, that will create such an icon for you. To create INVISIBL.ICO, just enter the command `DEBUG < INVISIBL.SCR`.

For an ordinary program, all you'd have to do is edit the Program Properties in Program Manager to use the invisible icon. Since you want to change the icon for ProgMan itself, a little more work is involved. What you must do is create an item for PROGMAN.EXE in the Start-Up group. Assign it the invisible icon, and delete its description. At the same time, you may want to assign it a hotkey, in case you can't find it on the screen. Move it to the top left corner of the Start-Up group, and restart Windows. You may also want to check Minimize on Use in ProgMan's Options menu, so the item will automatically iconize itself when you run a program.

Of course, you don't have to use this technique to make ProgMan's icon invisible. You can assign any custom icon to it, define a hotkey, and change its title to whatever you want.—Neil J. Rubenking

WORD PROCESSING

Bookmark Bug in WinWord 6.0

TIP Soon after upgrading to Microsoft Word for Windows 6.0, I found a problem file that caused the program to crash spo-

radically. Most of the time, WinWord behaved normally with the file loaded. But sometimes several lines of text would disappear from the screen when I pressed the Backspace key. Giving an Undo command at that point would retrieve the text, but any further attempt at editing quickly produced a General Protection Fault (GPF) message.

The problem was particularly annoying because, in addition to losing any unsaved text, I couldn't reload WinWord without getting completely out of Windows first. The program had tied up too much of the system resources, and there was no way to release these resources after crashing.

Since the file had never given me problems with WinWord 2.0, my first thought was that it had been corrupted. None of the usual fixes for corrupt files worked, however, and a call to Microsoft finally yielded the answer: WinWord 6.0 (but not WinWord 2.0) balks if you have a bookmark entered at the very beginning of a document. The cure is to remove the bookmark or to redefine it so that one or two characters precede it. In short: If you use bookmarks, avoid adding one at the very beginning of your documents.

Julie McCollum

Rosemont, Pennsylvania

►PC MAGAZINE: This is indeed an acknowledged bug in WinWord 6.0, and it's particularly disconcerting when it shows up in a file or template you've long been using in WinWord 2.0. Be aware, however, that if you run into this problem, you can usually save your work before WinWord GPFs. If you see a block of text disappear in response to typing a Backspace, give the Undo command as Ms. McCollum describes, and then *immediately* issue the File | Save command. Judging from my experience with this bug, you can expect to see the GPF message with your next keystroke, and you'll still have to back all the way out of Windows, but at least you'll have saved your work.

If you're not sure whether you have a bookmark at the beginning of a file, it's easy enough to find out. Choose Edit Bookmark to open the Bookmark dialog box, which includes a list of all bookmarks in the file. You can go to each bookmark in turn by selecting its name and hitting

the Go To button. In each case, WinWord will take you to the bookmark position in your text, as indicated by the cursor (for a bookmark that marks a specific position) or by a highlighted selection (for a bookmark that extends over more than one character).

If any of the bookmarks is the very first character of the file, you'll want to remove or redefine it. To delete a bookmark, simply highlight its name in the Bookmark dialog box and choose delete. To reposition a bookmark, place your cursor or selection at the new position, choose Edit Bookmark, enter the bookmark name in the Bookmark Name text box (either by typing it in or selecting it from the list), and choose Add.

Note too that if you must have a bookmark at the very beginning of a document—for a macro to work properly, for example—you can take advantage of WinWord's predefined \StartOfDoc bookmark. (For information on predefined bookmarks, choose Help Contents, select Programming with Microsoft Word, choose the Search button, and search for Predefined Bookmarks).

It seems appropriate to broaden this discussion a bit to cover strategies for dealing with other kinds of flaky behavior. When WinWord acts strangely with a particular file, it's generally because the file is corrupted—typically because you lost a network connection while working on a file or because you were working with a file on a floppy disk and you accidentally took out the disk without closing the file.

There are several simple approaches to fixing corrupt files. First, if you can open the file and move through it, set WinWord to show paragraph marks. You do this by clicking on the Show/Hide button or by choosing Tools | Options and then the View tab and making sure there's an X in the Paragraph Marks check box. Then open a new document file and copy everything but the last paragraph mark from the corrupt file into the new file. If the corrupt information is stored with the last paragraph mark, as it often is, this will solve the problem.

If the new file still gives WinWord fits, try saving it in Rich Text Format by choosing File | Save As, entering a new name, and choosing Rich Text Format in

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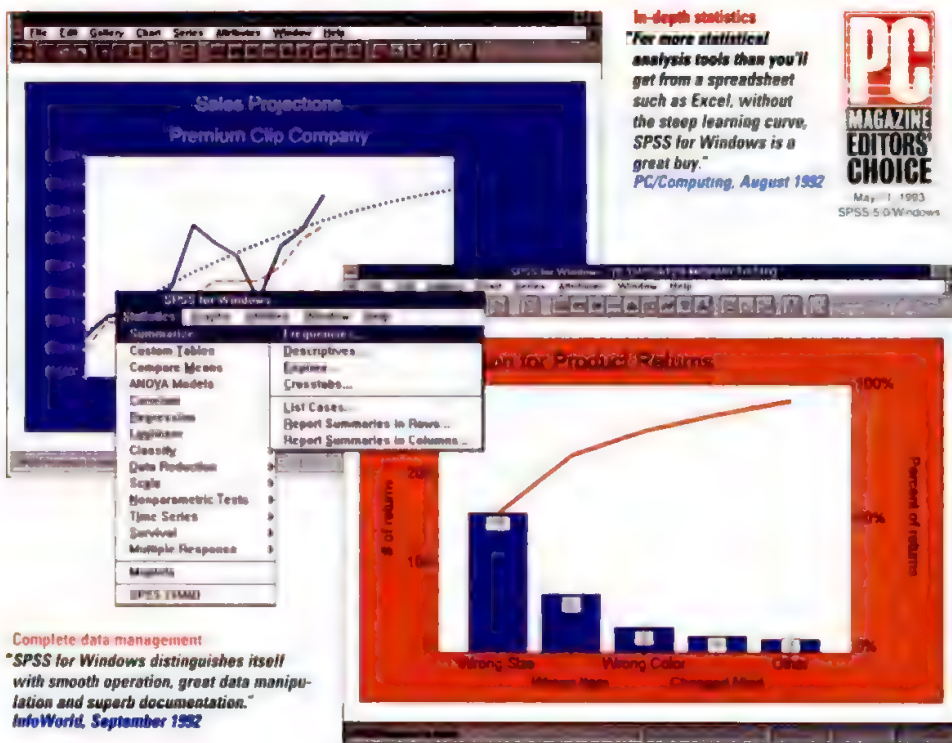
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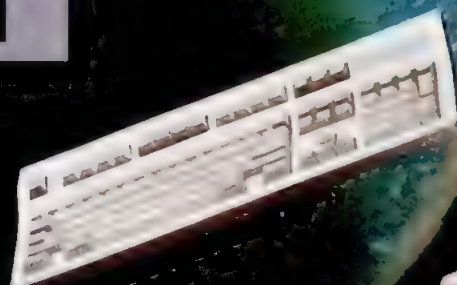
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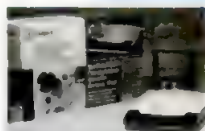
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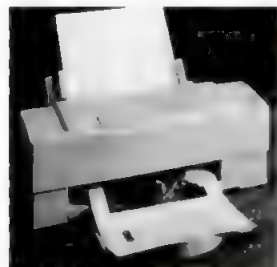
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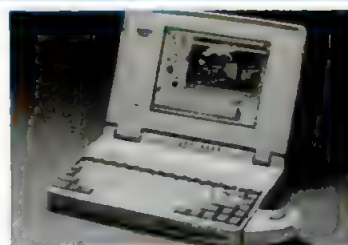
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the Save File As Type box. Once you've saved the file in RTF, you can open and resave it in WinWord format.

If neither of these strategies helps, try bracketing the problem by copying sections of the file to a new file. Copy the first half to one file and the last half to another, see which half the problem goes with, and repeat the bracketing with smaller and smaller sections. Once you've found the page containing the problem, you may be able to isolate it to a single paragraph or so by further bracketing.

Of course, if you can't open the document, none of these fixes will be much help. With WinWord 6.0, if the program hangs when you try to open the file, try switching to draft font first. Choose Tools | Options and then the View tab, and make sure there's an X in the Draft Font check box. If you can then open the document, you can try the first three fixes.

Finally, if none of these suggestions works, you should still be able to open the file with most text editors, including Windows Write. Strip out all the header information, which means everything that shows up before the text of the file, as well as everything that shows up after the text. Then save the file in any format WinWord can read. At this point, you'll usually be able to open the file in WinWord without problems. Leave this as a last line of defense, however. It will normally let you recover all your text, but you'll lose all your formatting. Note that if you have the Allow Fast Saves option set on the Tools | Option | Save tab, you may find the text jumbled once you remove the header information. It's a good idea *not to use the Fast Saves option* in any case, because there are known bugs in it that can crash your system.—M. David Stone

■ SPREADSHEETS

Function-Nesting Wizardry

❷ I am trying to set up an Excel 5.0 formula that returns different values depending on the value stored in an adjacent cell. My data is set up as in Figure 2.

If cell B2 is less than or equal to 40, I want cell C2 to return 10. If B1 is greater than 40 but less than or equal to 60, C2 should be 15. If B2 is greater than 60 but

less than or equal to 125, C2 should equal 18. The rest of column C should be just like C2, with each cell's value dependent upon the value in the corresponding cell of column B.

I know I should be able to do all of this with the IF function, but I can't figure out how. Please explain.

Dennis Matis
Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

► **PC MAGAZINE:** The IF function has the following syntax:

```
=IF(logical_test,value_if_true,
value_if_false)
```

That is, it accepts three arguments. The first argument is some sort of test—for example, is cell B2 < 40? The second argument is the value the function returns if the test is true, and the third argument is the value the function returns if the test is false. So if all that your formula at C2 has to do is to return 10 when B2 is less than 40 and 15 when B2 is not less than 40, you would write:

```
=IF(B2<40,10,15)
```

Simple enough. But in your case, if B2 is not less than 40, you still need to test to see whether it's less than or equal to 60. To do that in the same formula, you use a second IF function as the third argument of the first IF function. So if the requirements for C2 were as follows:

```
B2<40 . . . C2=10
B2>40 and B2<=60 . . . C2=15
B2>60 . . . C2=18
```

then your formula at C2 would be:

```
=IF(B2<40,10,IF(B2<=60,15,18))
```

Notice that the second IF function does not have to bother checking to see whether B2 is greater than 40. If B2 isn't greater than 40, this part of the formula never gets evaluated. So all the second IF has to test for is whether B2 is less than or equal to 60.

Notice also that the formula ends with two closing parentheses. One closes the "inner" IF, the other closes the "outer" IF. Getting the right number of parenthe-

ses all in the right places can be a bit of a challenge, particularly in formulas that involve functions "nested" within one another—that is, formulas in which functions are supplied as arguments to other functions. If you trip up on the parentheses, I recommend you use Excel's Function Wizard to build your formula. More about that in a moment.

Meanwhile, we're still not quite finished with this formula, because your letter says C2 should be 18 only if B2 is greater than 60 but also less than or equal to 125. That means we need yet another IF function as the third argument to the second IF function. We'll set this one up just the same way we set up the second IF,

	A	B	C
1	Date	River Flow	Required Minimum Flow
2	1-Mar	95	
3	2-Mar	35	
4	3-Mar	55	
5	7-Mar	140	
6	4-Mar	90	
7	5-Mar	95	
8	6-Mar	98	

Figure 2: The Required Minimum Flow column needs to be filled in with numbers based on the River Flow column.

except for one detail. Your letter doesn't say what C2 should equal if B2 is greater than 125.

We can handle that problem in two ways. The first way is simply to omit the third argument in the third IF function. The second way is to supply some value—something that makes sense under the circumstances—as the third argument to the third IF. If we go the first route, the final formula looks like this:

```
=IF(B2<40,10,IF(B2<=60,15,IF(B2<=
125,18)))
```

What does Excel do with a formula like this if all conditions in all the IFs are false, and the innermost IF does not specify a value_if_false argument? It returns the Boolean constant FALSE. That's ugly, but it's better than having the wrong answer in your cell. If you truly don't want any numeric value returned in C2 if B2 should happen to be greater than 125, you can put a text string

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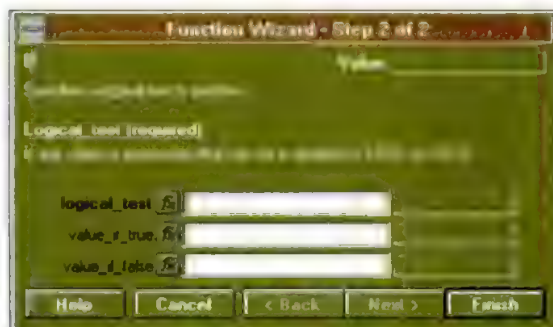


Figure 3: Excel's Function Wizard simplifies the process of building complex formulas.

in as the final argument to the innermost IF. For example, you might write something like this:

```
=IF(B2<40,10,IF(B2<=60,15,IF(B2<=125,10,"Invalid River Flow value.")))
```

You could even use Excel's Format Cells command to specify that C2's text be red if C2's value is text (but not if it's numeric). That would make your point about the validity of B2 a little more emphatic.

Nested IF functions are extremely useful, but constructing them can get a little messy. Excel provides a Wizard that may help you in circumstances like this. If you were building this formula with the Function Wizard, you would proceed as follows:

In cell C2, type =IF. Then click the fx icon to the right of the green check mark on the formula bar (or just press Ctrl-A). This summons the Wizard and lets it know that you're building a formula with the IF function. Figure 3 shows the Function Wizard.

Notice that the Wizard has three text boxes, one for each of IF's arguments. A few pithy lines of text above these boxes tell you what the IF function does, and additional text explains the purpose of each argument used by the function. Obviously, if you were working with a different function, you would see different text and perhaps a different number of text boxes. As you work with the Wizard, you'll also notice that it constructs your formula piece by piece on the formula bar as you fill out the argument text boxes.

Filling out the first two arguments is

straightforward enough, and you can point to the cells you're referencing, just as you might when creating a formula in the traditional manner. When you get to the third text box, you'll need another IF function, so click the fx icon to the left of this text box. The Wizard responds by displaying a categorized list of all of Excel's functions. IF is a logical function, so you would choose Logical in the list of categories,

then IF in the list of logical functions. After doing that and clicking the Next button, you'll see another dialog box that looks just like the one in Figure 3 (except that it would include the word *nested* in its title bar). Fill this one out just like the first one, and so on for as many levels of nesting as required. At that point, click OK several times until you are back in the worksheet with your formula complete. (Actually, the final click would be on a Finish button not an OK button, but you get the idea. Click approving buttons until the Wizard goes away.)

The Function Wizard has several virtues. It explains what each function in Excel's library is for and what arguments are required. It shows intermediate values as you're building complex formulas. Best of all, it gets all those pesky parentheses in the right places for you.—*Craig Stinson*

■ DATABASES

FoxPro's "Source is Out of Date" Message

? I have been bugged for some time by the message "Source is out of date" when using FoxPro for MS-DOS. When this message appears, my work comes to a complete halt. There is nothing in Microsoft's help screens or instruction books that explains it, though references are made to the message.

Can you tell me what "source" they

are talking about? What can I do to correct the problem so that I can continue with my work? How can I avoid creating the error in the future? Is there a general rule that covers this?

*John R. Crane
Sedona, Arizona*

►PC MAGAZINE: The *source* they refer to is the original program source code written by whoever created your application. Here's how it works: To create a FoxPro program, you type commands into a source file (a text file) and then "compile" the source file. This converts the commands into a special concise format that FoxPro understands and can execute quickly. The output of the compilation process is the file that FoxPro

executes when you run your application. This compiled output file and the program source file have to be kept in sync. When the source file is modified, it must be recompiled to generate a new compiled output file.

When this step is not taken, you get the

"Source is out of date" message. The message means you have a source file that is not in sync with its compiled output file. You will also get the message if you somehow change the date/time stamp of your source file, even if you haven't modified the program (for example, by using a utility program like TOUCH or the Norton Utilities to alter the file's date/time stamp).

To eliminate the message, you have to re-create the compiled file by opening the source file and then choosing Generate from the Program menu. Or, if your application uses a project, open the project and select the Build option. Then choose Rebuild All and click the OK button.

You may also get the "Source out of date" message if you have older versions of the program source code in your PATH ahead of the directory where the compiled file resides. In that case you should inventory your system and remove unwanted extra copies of the program source code.—*Sal Ricciardi* □



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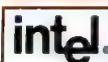
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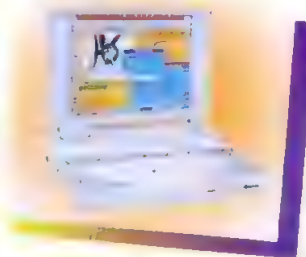
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Top performance. Terrific price.

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- Internal 3.5" floppy disk drive
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- AT-compatible keyboard
- Built-in ergonomic track ball
- Sparkling 9.4" color DSTN or 9.4" color active matrix TFT full size 640 x 480 display with 1MB video RAM; local bus video/GUI accelerator; simultaneous LCD/CRT display
- Advanced Power Management System
- NiMH batts. operate up to 3 hrs; free AC voltage adapter
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- AT-compatible keyboard
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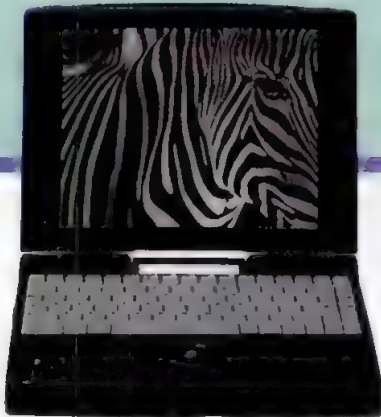
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T4850CT	486DX4/75	8MB	10.4" Active	772MB	\$4798

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T2400CS	486DX2/50	4MB	9.5" Dual Scan	250MB	\$2273
T2400CS	486DX2/50	4MB	9.5" Dual Scan	320MB	\$2443
T2400CT	486DX2/50	8MB	8.4" Active	250MB	\$2934
T2400CT	486DX2/50	8MB	8.4" Active	320MB	\$3005
T2450CT	486DX4/75	8MB	8.4" Active	320MB	\$3956
T2450CT	486DX4/75	8MB	8.4" Active	500MB	\$4251
T3600CT	486DX2/50	8MB	8.4" Active	500MB	\$3704



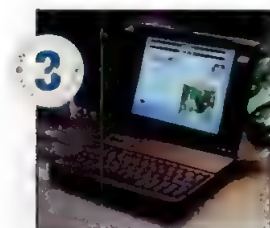
T4900CT

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- 772MB hard drive
- 10.4" active matrix color display
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Processor	Ram	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
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486DX4/75	8MB	10.3" Dual scan	510MB	\$3119
486DX4/75	8MB	10.4" Active	510MB	\$4095
486DX4/75	8MB	10.4" Active	700MB	\$4485

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486DX2/50	4MB	9.5" Dual scan	340MB	\$2110
486DX2/50	4MB	8.4" Active	455MB	\$2617
486DX4/75	4MB	9.5" Dual scan	455MB	\$2786
486DX4/75	4MB	8.4" Active	340MB	\$3039
486DX4/100	4MB	9.5" Active	525MB	\$4221
• Pentium 75MHz 8MB		10.5" Dual Scan	500MB	\$4981
• Pentium 75MHz 8MB		10.4" Active	772MB	\$5572

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- Removable floppy - add second battery

Processor	Ram	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	4MB	9.5" Dual scan	250MB	\$2347
486DX2/50	4MB	9.5" Dual scan	340MB	\$2488
486DX2/50	4MB	9.5" Active	250MB	\$2864
486DX2/50	4MB	9.5" Active	340MB	\$3004
486DX2/50	4MB	9.5" Active	540MB	\$3380
486DX4/75	4MB	9.5" Active	340MB	\$3380
486DX4/75	4MB	9.5" Active	540MB	\$3755

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486DX4-75	8MB	9.5" Active	340MB	\$3803
486DX4-100	8MB	9.5" Active	340MB	\$4131
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• Bravo NB 486	4MB	\$169
	8MB	\$399
PowerExec 4/25SL, Color, Plus	4MB	\$185
	8MB	\$359
PowerExec 5/25SL	4MB	\$149
5/25SL-C, EL	4MB	\$629
Premium Exec	4MB	\$160
586SX/20, 25, 25C		

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	8MB	\$299
Contura 4/25, 4/33	4MB	\$175
	8MB	\$365
Contura 5/20, 5/25, 5/25c	4MB	\$144
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Everex

Tempo LX Notebook	2MB	\$89
• STEP Note 486SX/33, 50, 75	16MB	\$699

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• ThinkPad 230	4MB	\$238
• ThinkPad 2300a	8MB	\$409
• ThinkPad 300	8MB	\$339
• ThinkPad 340, 355, 360, 730	4MB	\$169
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	2MB	\$85
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	8MB	\$340
UltraLite SL/20, SL/20P	2MB	\$85
	6MB	\$279
ProSpeed 286, 586SX/16	4MB	\$179

Texas Instruments

TravelMate 3000 (all models)	2MB	\$79
TravelMate 4000 (all models)	4MB	\$189
	16MB	\$999
TravelMate 4000M	4MB	\$198
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T2200SX, T1800 Series	8MB	\$317
T2400, T2490	4MB	\$184
	8MB	\$354
T1200Xc, 1600, 3100E	2MB	\$89
T3100SX, 3200SX, SXC	2MB	\$115
	4MB	\$147
T3300SL	4MB	\$165
	8MB	\$309
T3400, T3600	4MB	\$185
	8MB	\$348
T4400, T6400 (all models)	4MB	\$179
	8MB	\$339
	16MB	\$675
T1900, T4500, T4600	4MB (3.3 V)	\$188
T4700, T4850, T4900, T4900	8MB (3.3 V)	\$349
	16MB (3.3 V)	\$719
T5400, T5200, T5200C, T8500	2MB	\$87
	8MB	\$347

Zenith

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	8MB	\$298
• Z-Note 425 Series	4MB (3.3 V)	\$155
	8MB (3.3 V)	\$369
Z-Sport 420S, 425S	4MB	\$189
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• PWin 4000 1.38V; 600K, SCSI, 250K buffer, without controller	\$328
4PUS2, External, 170K, 600K, SCSI, 1MB buffer, without controller	\$494
• NEC Multiscan 4X; Internal, 230K, 600K, SCSI, without controller	\$292
Multiscan 4X2; External, 230K, 600K, SCSI, without controller	\$490

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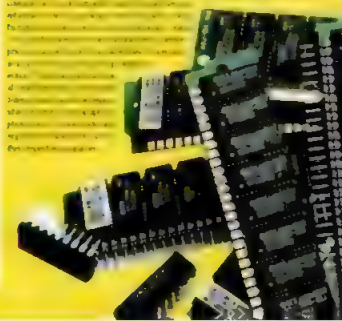
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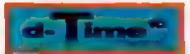


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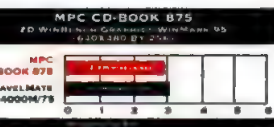


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WINDOWS APPLICATIONS	GOOD	GOOD
DOE APPLICATIONS	GOOD	GOOD
ROAD WARRIOR	GOOD	FAIR
DESKTOP REPLACEMENT	GOOD	GOOD
TFT 100 MMH, 8MB RAM, 480MB HDD	\$2818	\$6480

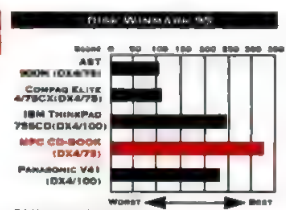
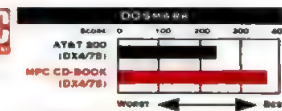
PC MAGAZINE, JAN. 24, '95



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• 100/50/100/46/100 MHz	• Accelerated 12-bit VESA Local Bus VGA with 1MB	• Built-in microphone and stereo speakers
• Built-in double speed CD-ROM supports 5.25" (3.5")	• Built-in pointing device (Vena Vena)	• (I/O) parallel, serial, VGA & audio output
• 12 free CD titles	• PCMCIA Type III slot	• DOS 6.22 Windows for Work Group
• 4MB expandable to 12MB	• 16-bit stereo (Sound Blaster compatible)	• Carrying case
• 9.5" Dual Scan & TFT Active LCD screen	• NIMH battery	• 6.6 lbs. (15.5) with battery
• VGA port support 1024x768x256 color	• Advanced power management	• Cigarette lighter adapter



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SCAN, 8MB RAM,
280MB HDD

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700 SERIES SPECIFICATIONS

- DX2-50, DX2-66, DX4-75 or 100 MHz
- 8MB RAM, max 32MB, EMS 4.0 support
- 3.5" 1.44MB FDD
- Slide-out HDD: 280MB up to 600MB
- 9.5" or optional 10.4" color dual scan STN LCD
- 1MB Vedio Local bus
- VGA port support 1024x768x256 color
- New PCMCIA IV slot, support 1 type II & 1 type III
- Built-in Touch Pad or 19mm extra-large centertrack ball
- Built-in 16-bit stereo Sound Blaster compatible
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- Advanced SMI power management
- System status panel
- Upgradeable LCD screen
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DUAL SCAN 100MHZ, 8MB RAM, 524MB HDD	\$2,475
TFT ACTIVE MATRIX 100MHZ, 8MB RAM, 524MB HDD	\$3,255

DUAL SCAN 100MHZ, 8MB RAM, 524MB HDD	\$2,760
TFT ACTIVE MATRIX 100MHZ, 8MB RAM, 524MB HDD	\$3,815

TDK PCMCIA 28.8 FAX/MODEM	\$379	MPC PCMCIA EXT. CD-ROM DRIVE	\$255
TDK PCMCIA 14.4 FAX/MODEM	\$189	TARGUS LEATHER CARRYING CASE	\$ 95
D-LINK PCMCIA ETHERNET 2 IN 1	\$129	MPC 4MB RAM CARD UPGRADE	\$155
		MPC 8MB RAM CARD UPGRADE	\$399
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CACHE MEMORY

	128K	256K	512K	1024K
2845	19.00	8.50	8.00	5.50
32Kx8 (3.3V)		8.50	14.50	7.00
64Kx4		11.00	9.00	8.00
64Kx4		11.00	9.00	8.00
128Kx4		8.00	7.00	8.00
128Kx4		50.00	39.00	29.00

Individual D-RAM Chips

	128K	256K	512K	1024K
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80
1Mx1	4.80	4.80	3.80	4.80

INTEL Math Chips

	8037	8037	8037	8037
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
8037	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00

AMBRA

	4.8Mx4	4.8Mx4	4.8Mx4	4.8Mx4
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
4.8Mx4	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00

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	CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00
CX486 DR# 25.50	229.00	229.00

DIMM MODULES

	4Mx16	8Mx16	16Mx16	32Mx16
4Mx16	194.00	309.00	309.00	309.00
8Mx16	194.00	309.00	309.00	309.00
16Mx16	194.00	309.00	309.00	309.00
32Mx16	194.00	309.00	309.00	309.00

SIMM MODULES (Add \$3.00 for SFP)

	4096	8096	16096	32096	64096	128096
256 x 9						
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1Mx9 x 9 (8 chip)	48.00	48.00	42.00	40.00	40.00	40.00

72 PIN SIMMS (EISA)

	256 x 16	512 x 16	1024 x 16	2048 x 16	4096 x 16	8192 x 16
256 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
512 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
1024 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
2048 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
4096 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
8192 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
256 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
512 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
1024 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
2048 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
4096 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00
8192 x 16	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00	89.00

CYRIX FASMATH PROCESSOR

	83087	83087	83087	83087
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00
83087	49.00	49.00	49.00	49.00

AST MEMORY

	128K	256K	512K	1024K	2048K	4096K
128K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
256K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
512K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
1024K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
2048K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
4096K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
128K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
256K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
512K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
1024K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
2048K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
4096K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00

ZENITH MEMORY MODULES

	128K	256K	512K	1024K	2048K	4096K
128K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
256K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
512K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
1024K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
2048K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
4096K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
128K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
256K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
512K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
1024K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
2048K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
4096K	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00

MAGNAVOX

	286-386SX-18	386SX-20	486SX-20	486SX-20	486SX-20	486SX-20
286-386SX-18	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
486SX-20	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00

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IBM Compatible & PS/2

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	16 BIT MEMORY	386 AT	386 AT	386 AT	386 AT	386 AT
16 BIT MEMORY	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
386 AT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00

BOCA XT 8 BIT BUS

	Expanded memory for XT	16Mx4	32Mx4	64Mx4	128Mx4	256Mx4
Expanded memory for XT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
16Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
32Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
64Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
128Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
256Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
Expanded memory for XT	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
16Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
32Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
64Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
128Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00
256Mx4	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00	189.00

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0-16Meg. Ext-Expand Memory Bd for P/52 70, 80, 90, Lin 4 0					
04Meg	24Meg	44Meg	84Meg	164Meg	
\$139.00	\$239.00	\$319.00	\$499.00	\$859.00	

Hewlett-Packard

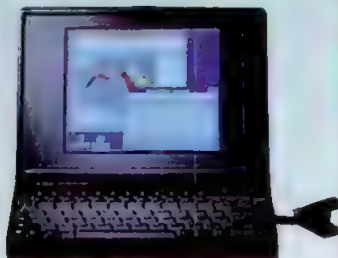
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Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	10.3" Dual Scan	260MB	\$2499
486DX2/50	10.3" Dual Scan	340MB	2829
486DX2/50	10.3" Dual Scan	520MB	3199
486DX2/50	10.4" Active	340MB	3769
486DX2/50	10.4" Active	520MB	4129
486DX4/100	10.3" Dual Scan	340MB	3619
486DX4/100	10.3" Dual Scan	520MB	3999
486DX4/100	10.4" Active	340MB	4489
486DX4/100	10.4" Active	520MB	4829

HP OmniBook Notebook PCs 600 Series Lightweight with Performance

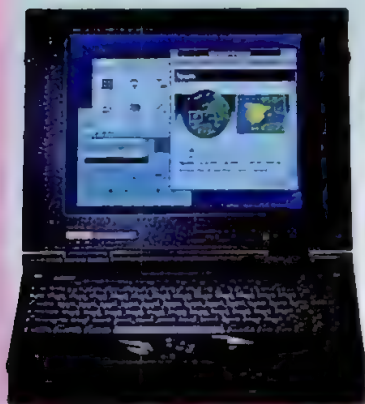
Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	8.5" Dual Scan	170MB	\$2549
486DX2/50	8.5" Dual Scan	260MB	2829
486DX4/75	8.5" Dual Scan	170 MB	3099
486DX4/75	8.5" Dual Scan	260MB	3379



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PC Computing Five Star Award	YES
Lifetime Toll-Free Technical Support	YES
FREE Hardware Configuration	YES
FREE Software Installation	YES
Same Day Shipment	YES
Pre-Installed Software Discount	YES
All Major Credit Cards Accepted	YES
Never a Hidden Surcharge	YES
\$4.95 Shipping on Most Peripherals	YES
Compaq Authorized for Direct Marketing	YES
90 Days Same As Cash	YES
Hewlett-Packard and IBM Authorized	YES
Low-Cost Business Leases	YES
Volume Purchase Agreements	YES
Customer Satisfaction Is Top Priority	YES

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Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
Pentium 75	9.5" Active	340MB	\$ 4729
Pentium 75	9.5" Active	540MB	5099
Pentium 75	9.5" High Res.	540MB	5479
Pentium 75	9.5" Active	810MB	5599
Pentium 75	9.5" High Res.	810MB	5989

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Versa M

- ▲ 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot
- ▲ Removable hard drive, floppy & screen
- ▲ Integrated speaker and microphone
- ▲ MS DOS, Windows 3.1, Windows Sound System, MS Video for Windows Run Time

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX4/75	9.5" Dual Scan	340MB	\$ 3219
486DX4/75	9.5" Active	540MB	4199
486DX4/75	9.5" High Res.	540MB	4589
486DX4/100	9.5" True Color	540MB	4819
486DX4/100	9.5" Active	810MB	5049
486DX4/100	9.5" High Res.	810MB	5429

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Processor	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/66 Minitor	420MB	1449
P60 Minitor	420MB	1799

Business Lease: \$53/mo.
NEC monitors start at \$299.99

Versa V

- ▲ 4MB RAM expandable to 20MB
- ▲ 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot
- ▲ Removable hard drive
- ▲ Removable floppy — add second battery
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.21, Windows 3.1

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	9.5" Dual Scan	250MB	\$2369
486DX2/50	9.5" Dual Scan	340MB	2499
486DX2/50	9.5" Active	250MB	2889
486DX2/50	9.5" Active	340MB	3029
486DX2/50	9.5" Active	540MB	3399
486DX4/75	9.5" Active	340MB	3399
486DX4/75	9.5" Active	540MB	3779

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- ▲ 20 popular software titles included!



ThinkPad® 755CD

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX4/100	10.4" Dual Scan	340MB	\$4599
486DX4/100	10.4" Dual Scan	540MB	4949
486DX4/100	10.4" Dual Scan	810MB	5399
486DX4/100	10.4" Active	340MB	5599
486DX4/100	10.4" Active	540MB	5999
486DX4/100	10.4" Active	810MB	6399
486DX4/100	10.4" Active	540MB	7049*
486DX4/100	10.4" Active	810MB	7499*

*** Features built-in
CD-ROM Drive**

**ThinkPad® 360E
Notebooks**

as low as
\$3049

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	9.5" Dual Scan	340MB	\$2699
486DX2/50	9.5" Dual Scan	540MB	3049
486DX2/50	8.4" Active	340MB	3099
486DX2/50	8.4" Active	540MB	3449



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Notebooks**

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- ▲ 3.5" floppy drive
- ▲ PCI local bus graphics
- ▲ Plug and Play compliant
- ▲ Windows 95 ready
- ▲ MS-DOS, Windows 3.1

Processor	RAM	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	4MB	270MB	\$1149
486DX2/66	8MB	420MB	1529
486DX4/100	8MB	420MB	1719

Contura 410

- ▲ 486DX2/50 processor
- ▲ 4MB RAM expandable to 20MB
- ▲ 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot
- ▲ Large built-in trackball
- ▲ MS-DOS, Windows 3.1, Tabworks, Lotus Organizer

Display	Hard Drive	Price
9.5" Dual Scan	350MB	\$2369
8.4" Active	350MB	2839

Business Lease: \$87/mo.

COMPAQ

COMPAQ color monitors start at \$279.99

**LTE Elite
Extra Performance
on the road**

- ▲ NEW! 10.4" Active Matrix color display
- ▲ 8MB RAM exp. to 32MB
- ▲ Integrated trackball
- ▲ Built-in AC adapter
- ▲ 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.2, Windows 3.1, MS Video for Windows Run Time, Tabworks

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX4/75	9.5" Dual Scan	340MB	\$3129
486DX4/75	9.5" Dual Scan	510MB	3499
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	510MB	5029
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	810MB	5389

Business Lease: \$103/mo.



LTE Elite

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**AST Advantage!
Adventure Multimedia**

- ▲ Quad speed IDE CD-ROM drive
- ▲ 16-bit Creative Labs SoundBlaster
- ▲ 14.4 Send/Receive Fax modem with telephone answering and speaker phone
- ▲ LOADS of FREE Software (titles included differ by model)
- ▲ 3-Year Warranty

Model	RAM	Hard Drive
486DX2/66	8MB	540MB
486DX2/66	4MB	540MB
486DX2/66	8MB	540MB
Pentium 75MHz	8MB	540MB
Pentium 75MHz	8MB	1GB
Pentium 90MHz	8MB	1GB
Pentium 100MHz	8MB	1GB

*AST Color Monitors start at \$349.99

AST Ascentia 910N

- ▲ 10.4" Active and 10.3" Dual Scan Displays
- ▲ NEW! Lithium Ion Battery for extra long life
- ▲ PanVision graphics for up to 1024x768 resolution
- ▲ 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	10.3" Dual Scan	340MB	\$2749
486DX4/75	10.3" Dual Scan	510MB	3149
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	510MB	4129
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	700MB	4519



Ascentia 910N

Ascentia 810N

- ▲ LARGE, 10.4" Dual Scan displays
- ▲ 4MB RAM expandable to 20MB
- ▲ Removable hard drive and floppy drive
- ▲ 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot

Model	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/66	10.4" Dual Scan	250MB	\$ 2399
486DX2/66	10.4" Dual Scan	340MB	2539
486DX2/66	10.4" Dual Scan	510MB	2689

Business Lease: \$88/mo.

**Adventure
Multimedia**



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Packard Bell

The Number One Name in Multimedia

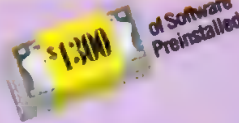
**Packard Bell
Force Multimedia**

- ▲ 16-bit SoundBlaster compatible sound card
- ▲ Quad speed CD-ROM drive
- ▲ Built-in 14.4 Send/Receive Fax modem with telephone answering
- ▲ PCI Local bus graphics and hard drive
- ▲ 1280x1024 resolution

Processor	RAM	Hard Drive	Price
Pentium 75MHz	8MB	850MB	\$1809
Pentium 75MHz	8MB	1.275GB	1929
Pentium 75MHz (MT)	16MB	1.275GB	2299
Pentium 100MHz	8MB	1.275GB	2419
Pentium 100MHz(MT)	16MB	1.275GB	2759

Packard Bell monitors start at \$229.99

Business Lease: \$66/mo.



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- ▲ 1 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot
- ▲ MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups, RunTime Video for Windows, Windows Sound System

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX4/75	10.4" Dual Scan	500MB	\$3639
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	500MB	4749



10.4" Active Matrix and Dual Scan Displays

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- ▲ 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot (T2100 series), 1 Type II and 1 Type III PCMCIA slot (T2400 series)
- ▲ 82-key keyboard
- ▲ MS-DOS, Windows 3.1
- ▲ Accupoint pointing device
- ▲ Enhanced power management

Model	Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
T2100	486DX2/50	9.5" Mono	250MB	\$1439
T2100	486DX2/50	10.4" Dual Scan	330MB	2249
T2100	486DX2/50	8.4" Active	330MB	3099
T2400	486DX2/50	9.5" Dual Scan	250MB	2279
T2400	486DX2/50	9.5" Dual Scan	320MB	2449
T2400	486DX2/50	8.4" Active	250MB	2889
T2400	486DX2/50	8.4" Active	320MB	2949
T2450CT	486DX4/75	9.5" Active	320MB	3899
T2450CT	486DX4/75	9.5" Active	500MB	4199

Business Lease: \$53/mo.



T2400

TOSHIBA

T4900 Your Dream Machine

- ▲ 10.4" active matrix color display
- ▲ 772MB hard drive, 8MB/40MB
- ▲ Microsoft Sound System, built-in microphone, audio out port
- ▲ 1 Type II and 1 Type III PCMCIA slot
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.21, Windows for Workgroups 3.11 and more

\$5499

75MHz
Pentium



T4700, T4800 and T4850

Sight, Sound & Processing Power

- ▲ Brilliant color display with local bus video
- ▲ 1 Type II and 1 Type III PCMCIA slot
- ▲ Microsoft Sound System, built-in microphone, audio out port
- ▲ MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups 3.11, UltraFont, Indeo video compression software

Model	Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
T4700	486DX2/50	9.5" Active	320MB	\$2999
T4800	486DX4/75	9.5" Active	500MB	4189
T4850	486DX4/75	10.4" Active	500MB	4519
T4850	486DX4/75	10.4" Active	772MB	4829

Portégé T3600

Award-Winning Subnote

- ▲ Ultra-portability at only 4.4 lbs.
- ▲ 8MB RAM expandable to 24MB
- ▲ PCMCIA Type II slot
- ▲ External 3.5" diskette drive
- ▲ Integrated Accupoint pointing device

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	8.4" Active	500MB	\$3719

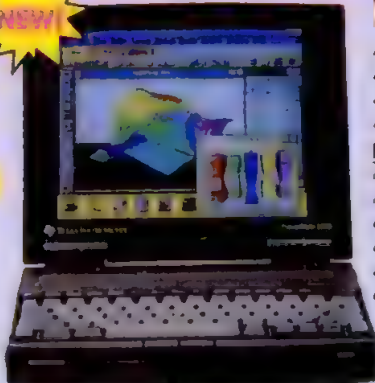
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with PCI Bus
Technology

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- ▲ Built-in dual Lithium Ion batteries
- ▲ PCI bus architecture to optimize Pentium processor performance **as low as \$4999**
- ▲ Removable hard drive
- ▲ 2MB Video RAM
- ▲ 16-bit sound, speaker, microphone and MIDI

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
Pentium 75MHz	10.5" Dual Scan	500MB	\$4999
Pentium 75MHz	10.4" Active	772MB	5599



TM 5000

Texas Instruments

New TravelMate 5000

TravelMate 4000M

- ▲ Brilliant color display
- ▲ 16-bit sound card
- ▲ Integrated pointing device
- ▲ 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slot

Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486DX2/50	9.5" Dual Scan	340MB	\$2119
486DX2/50	8.4" Active	455MB	2629
486DX4/75	9.5" Dual Scan	455MB	2799
486DX4/75	8.4" Active	340MB	3069
486DX4/75	8.4" Active	455MB	3319
486DX4/100	9.5" Active	\$25MB	4279

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VERSA 1/50C 240MM	\$2264	406 51/23 Active Matrix 250MM	
VERSA 1/75C 340MM	\$2097	406 832/50 Dual Scan 170MM	
VERSA M/750 340MM Active	\$3114	406 832/50 Active Matrix 250MM	
VERSA M/75C 340MM Active	\$4814		
VERSA M/100C 810MM Active	\$4729		
VERSA M/1000C 810MM Active	\$5097		
VERSA P/75C 340MM Active	\$4637		
VERSA P/75C 810MM Active	\$5284		
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250M Ext. 042/50 Mono 200MM	\$1467	T1191C3 200 MM	
250M Ext. 042/50 Dual Scan 200MM	\$2124	T1194C3 200/320MM	
250M Ext. 042/50 Review 200MM	\$3144	T1194C7 200/320MM	
		127100 250MM	
		T2100C3 350MM	
		T2100C7 250MM	
		T2150C5 500MM	
		T2150C7 500MM	
		T2400C5 500/200MM	
		T2400C7 250/320MM	
		T2450C7 330/500 MM	
		T3000C7 250MM	
		T3600C7 500MM	
		T4700C7 200/320MM	
		T4800C7 500MM	
		T4850C7 500/810MM	
		T4900C7 Pentium 810MM	
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ActiveMatrix 640CZ Act. Color 340MM	\$3044		
ActiveMatrix 644C Dual Color 340MM	\$2294		
ActiveMatrix 680C Dual Color 340MM	\$2879		
ActiveMatrix 680CZ Act. Color 340MM	\$4124		
HEWLETT-PACKARD OMNIBOOK			
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640C 042-75 Dual Scan 170MM	\$3879		
4000 042/50 Dual Scan 340MM	\$4409		
4000 054.100 Act. CL 340MM	\$5499		

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53007	360 Memo 170/24000	51899/52299
53049	360CS Color Dual Screen 17000	52349
56499	360CS Color Dual Screen 34000	52749
	360CS Color Dual Screen 34000	51999
	701CS 002.50 Dual Screen 36000	54999
	701CS 002.5 Dual Screen 54000	54999
	701C 002.50 Act. Color 54000	54999
	701C 002.5 Act. Color 54000	55999
	755CS Color Dual Screen 17000	52099
	340/54000	54099/54599
	755C Color Active 17000	54400
	340/54000	54809/55199
	755C Color Active 34000	54999
	540/81000	56499/57199
	755CS Color Active 34000	54099
	540/81000	55299/55899
	755CS Color Active/CD ROM	
	540/81000	57399/58149
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52707	TM4000 in 002.50 Dual Screen 45500	52634
52708	TM4000 in 002.50 Dual Screen 34000	52794
52745/54074	TM4000 in 002.50 Dual Screen 34000	52847
54377	TM4000 in 002.50 Active Color 45500	52987
55494	TM4000 in 002.50 Dual Screen 52400	54227
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Cosmos 1.34 int./ext.	\$379/\$419	POMCIA 16-bit Stereo & SCSI II	\$489
Cosmos Dual Std 208 POMCIA	\$399		
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POWER		14.4 Pocket w/FAX	\$155
28.8/14.4 Fax external	\$259	1.34 28.800 bps Modem int./ext.	\$149/\$399
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15" MultiSync XP15	\$437		
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CE P1150/P2823	\$129/\$175	Model 400/400	
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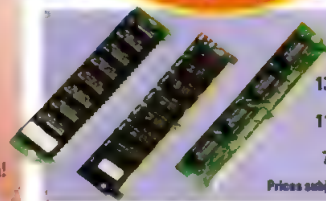


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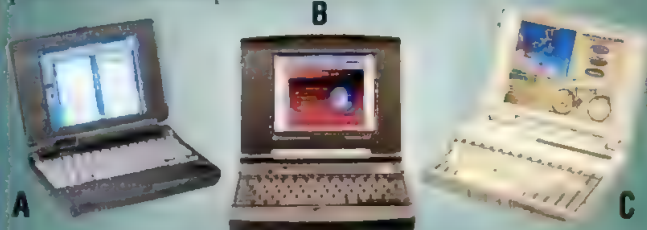


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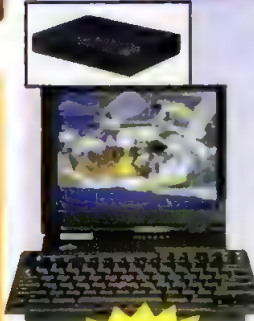
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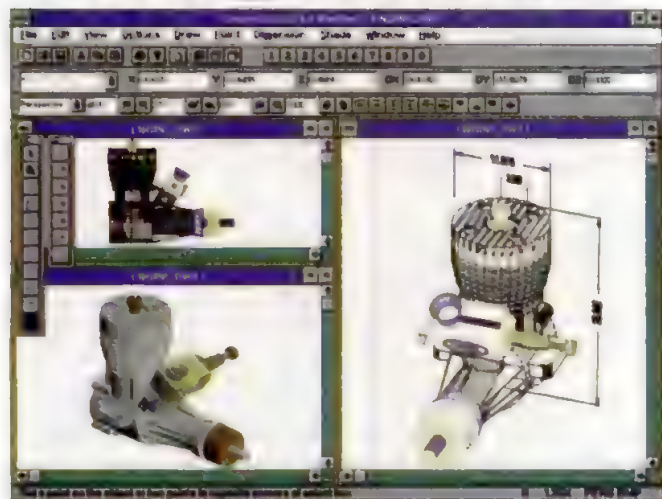
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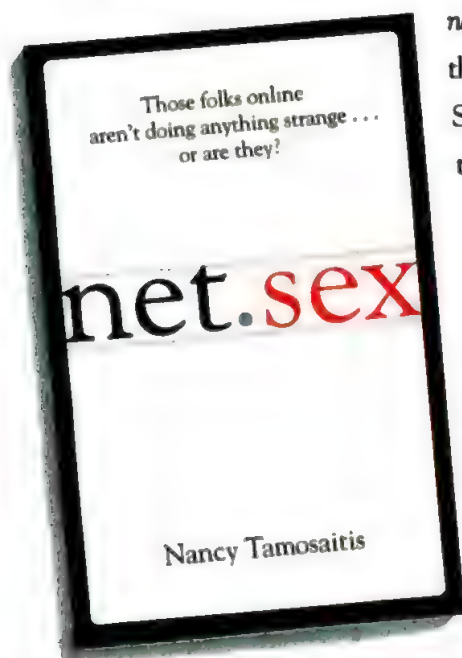
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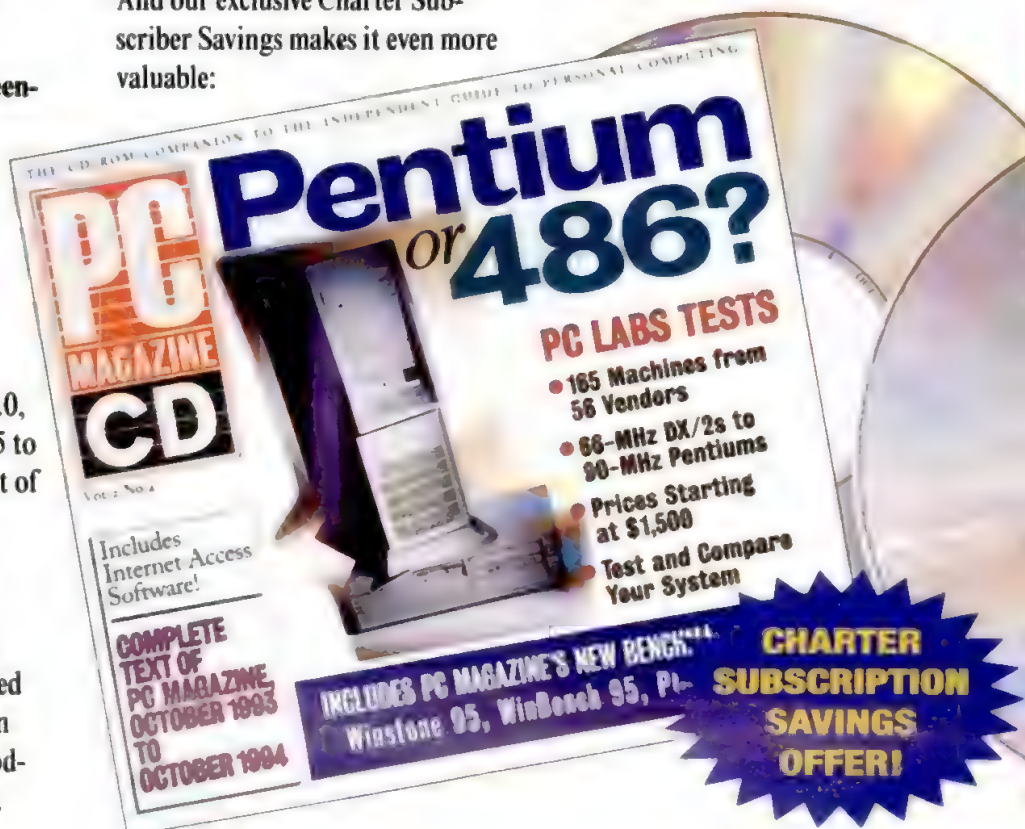
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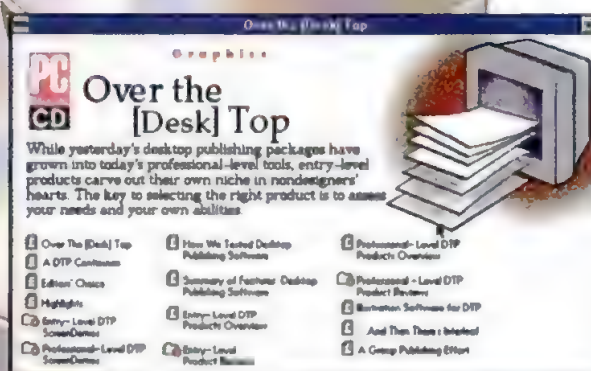
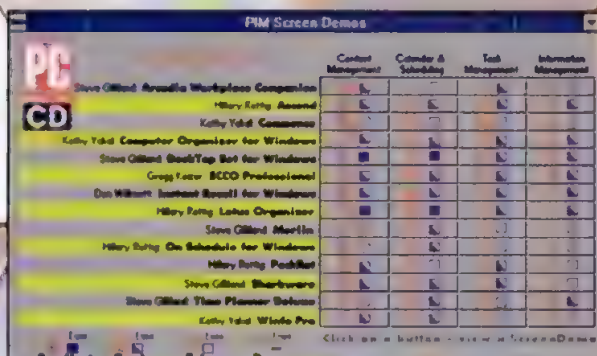
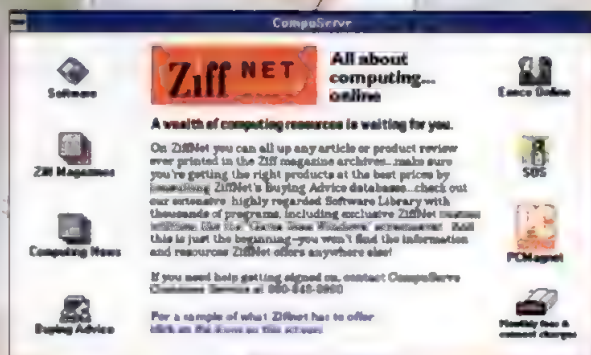
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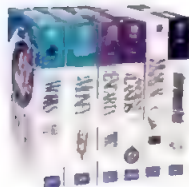
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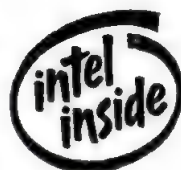


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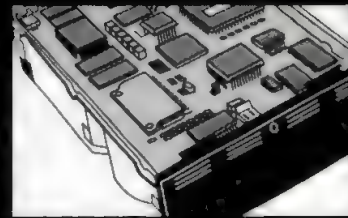
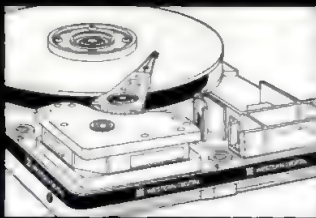
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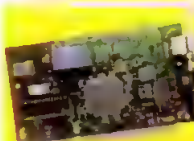


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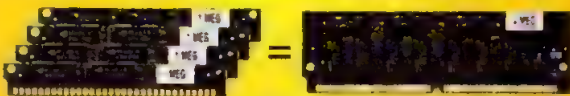
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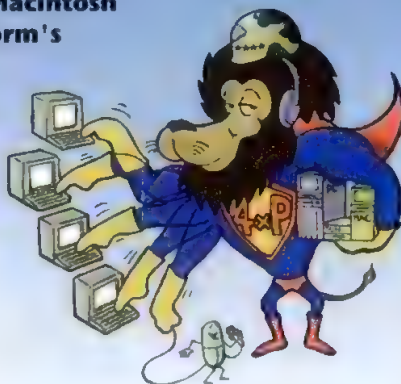
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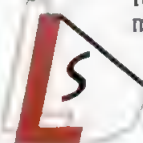
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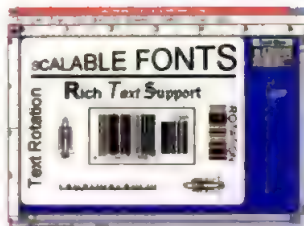
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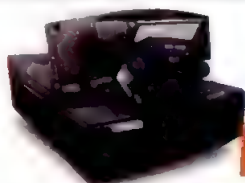
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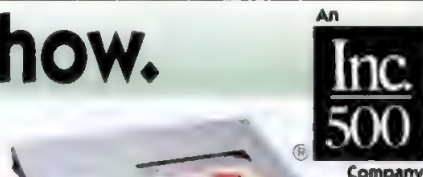
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4. Is your company a reseller?
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- 06 ☐ Windows

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 - 03 ☐ Manufacturer-Aerospace
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 - 02 ☐ No
5. For how many IBM PCs and compatibles do you specify brands of products?
 - 01 ☐ 10 or less
 - 02 ☐ 11-25
 - 03 ☐ 26-50
 - 04 ☐ 51-100 or more
6. Are there any PCs in your office?
 - 01 ☐ Linked to mainframe
 - 02 ☐ Linked to minis
 - 03 ☐ Networked together
7. Please check the equipment currently installed at your location. (Check all that apply)
 - 01 ☐ IBM or Compatible PCs
 - 02 ☐ IBM or Compatible Mainframes
 - 03 ☐ IBM or Compatible Minis
 - 04 ☐ Macintosh
 - 05 ☐ CD-ROM
 - 06 ☐ Windows
8. Do you plan to buy any PC products?
 - 01 ☐ Now
 - 02 ☐ In 4 to 6 months
 - 03 ☐ In 7 to 12 months
 - 04 ☐ No definite plans
9. Number of employees in your entire company:
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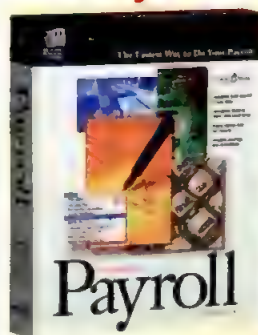
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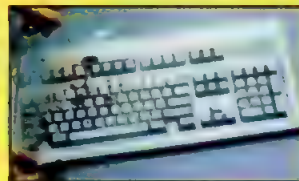
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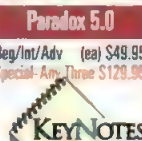
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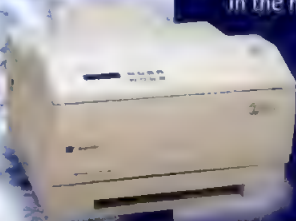
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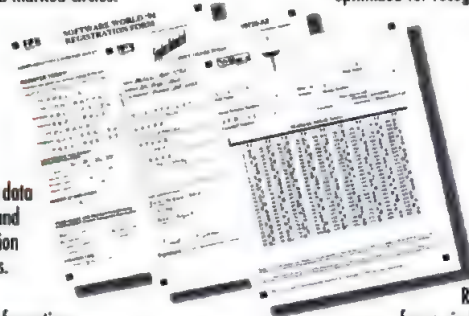
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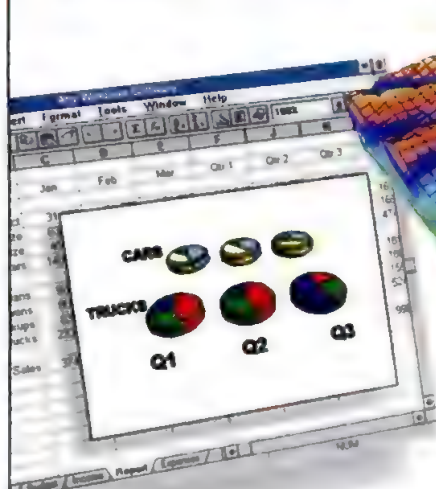
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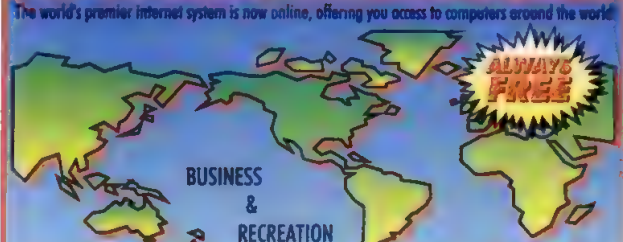
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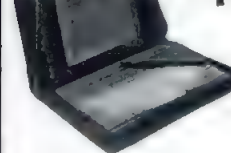
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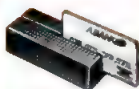
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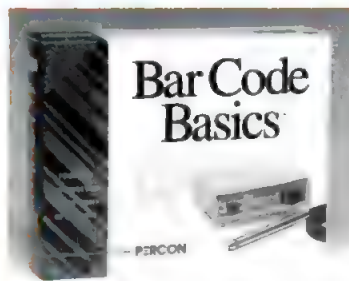
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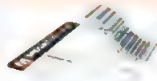
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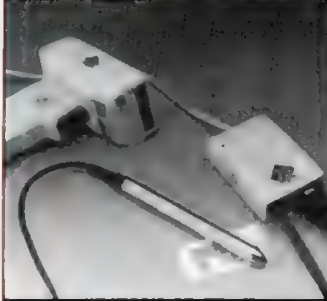
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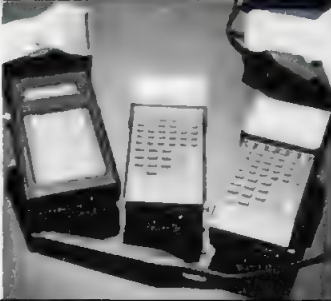
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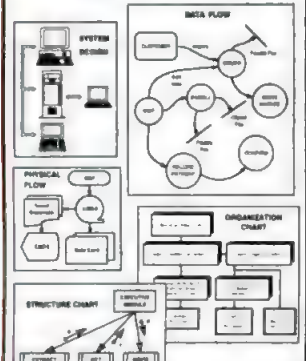
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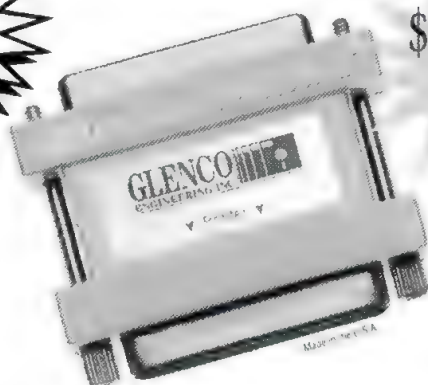
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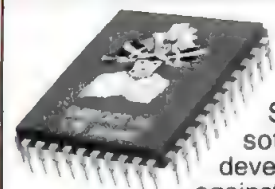
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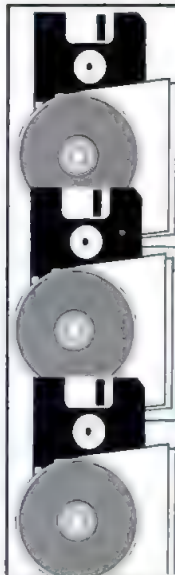
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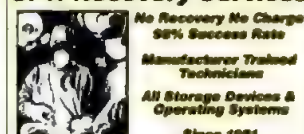
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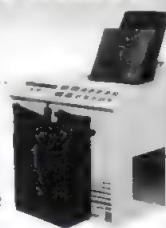
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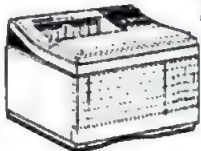
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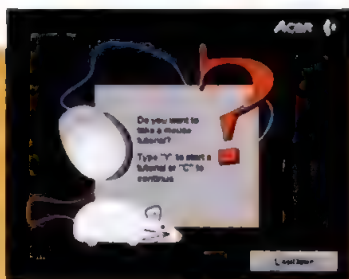
With multimedia capabilities and Pentium CPUs, these nine PCs prove that in 1995, home is where the hardware action is heading.

By Alice Hill

Does the term *home PC* still have you thinking of scaled-down, underperforming office throwaways? Then it's time to look again. In 1995, home is where the hardware action is heading. The nine systems we found with street prices under \$2,500 probably outmuscle what you're running at work, and they add multimedia capabilities for good measure.

What makes or breaks a good home system is sheer ability. The more you can do with your computer—the more it can change, from letter writer to tax accountant to teacher—the more

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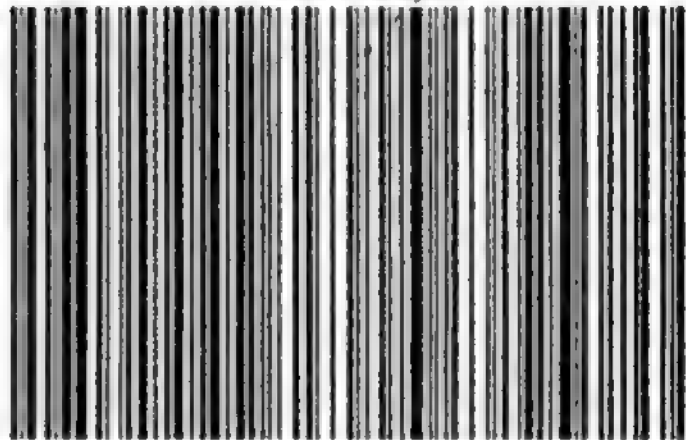
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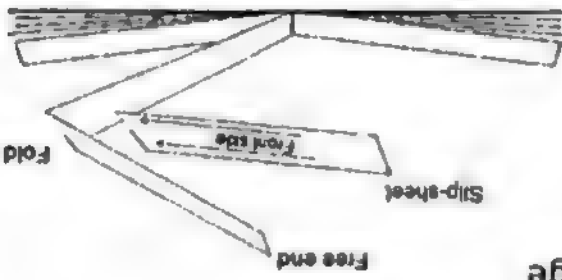
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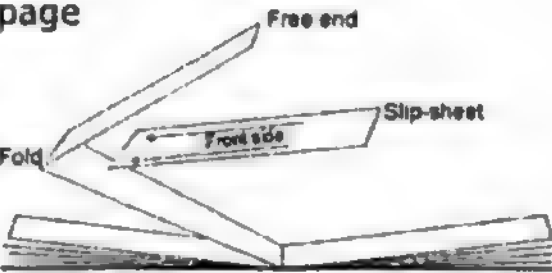
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Foldout slip-sheet



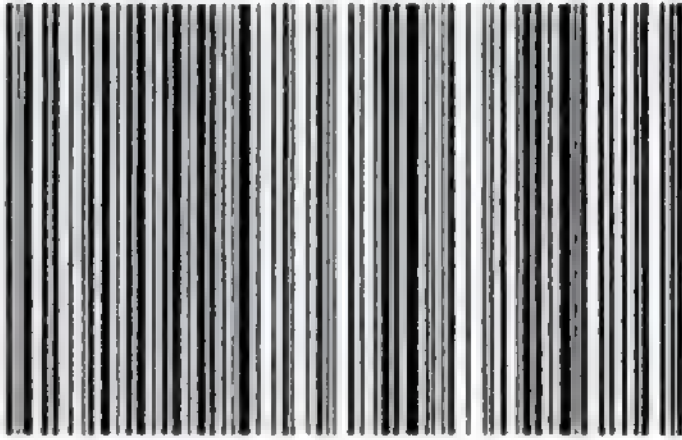
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After Hours: PC Magazine At Home

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useful it is. In short, a good home PC must offer solid hardware paired with useful software, all ready to run straight out of the box.

The nine systems we gathered for this story are true home PCs. They offer documentation you can digest, powerful features, and capabilities ranging from voice mail answering systems to high-speed modems to software for every member of the family. They also offer something for both the seasoned computer user and the novice: easy access via innovative Windows front ends and tutorials, and

just plain Windows for those who know their way around a system.

REVIEW CRITERIA

To be included in this roundup, products needed to be Pentium-class systems configured for home multimedia use with a double-speed CD-ROM drive (or faster), a 16-bit sound board, speakers, and bundled software. We set a street-price ceiling of \$2,500 (the list price could be higher), which included a system configured with 8MB RAM, a 400MB hard disk (or larger), a 14.4-Kbps

fax modem, a 14-inch color monitor (or larger), a mouse, and a keyboard. The systems also had to be specifically targeted at the home market.

In addition to the nine vendors that sent in systems, several others were polled. Compaq did not have a Pentium-based version of its popular Presario ready in time for this roundup, and AT&T was in the middle of revamping its home line. New offerings from both companies should be available shortly.

The systems we did include all offer considerably more than our minimum requirements. The smallest hard disk in the roundup came in at 514MB; three of the systems offer more than 1GB of hard disk space. Two of the systems (the IBM Aptiva 730 and the Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000) are driven by 60-MHz Pentium CPUs, two systems are based on 90-MHz Pentiums (the Micron P90 Home MPC and NEC Ready 9510), and

OUT-OF-BOX SOFTWARE-COMPATIBILITY TESTS



To evaluate the systems' abilities to run the types of software typically used in homes, we performed application-specific compatibility tests. Only two of the systems (the Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000 and the Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium) were able to run all of the applications in our test suite successfully.

OS/2 proved to be the most problematic of the applications. OS/2's device driver does not support the Mitsumi CD-ROM drive used by both the AcerAcros Pentium Minitower and the NEC Ready 9510, nor the AMI BIOS used by the USA Flex PT-75 MultiMedia Classic. The Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC produced an error message that suggested we either upgrade the system or contact a service representative. The AcerAcros, the Gateway PS-75, and the Micron P90 Home MPC all had difficulty locating a necessary QuickTime for Windows DLL when attempting to run Myst, because a newer version of QuickTime had been installed by another application. The IBM Aptiva 730 ran into sound and video problems on the Magic School Bus test, and the USA Flex PT-75 periodically hung on exiting that program. Because of a faulty SmartDrive setting, the USA Flex PT-75 also had difficulty running DOOM II. The AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p, meanwhile, experienced shifts in the Windows color palette when exiting Star Trek.

THE APPLICATIONS The software compatibility tests called for a system to be able to load and run the following applications successfully: DOOM II (GT Interactive Software); The Magic School Bus Explores the Human Body (Microsoft Corp.); Myst (Broderbund Software); OS/2 Warp, Version 3 (IBM Corp.); the PC Magazine CD (Ziff-Davis Publishing Co.); and The Star Trek Interactive Technical Manual (Simon & Schuster Interactive).

WHAT THE GRADES MEAN We have given the systems letter grades for each of the application-compatibility tests. An A means that a system loaded the software and was able to run many basic functions within the package successfully. We awarded a grade of B to a system that successfully ran an application after we first encountered some minor, easily remedied problems. If a system was able to load an application but encountered intermittent lockups or crashes when attempting to run the program, it received a grade of C. Systems earning D grades encountered major difficulties with sound, video, or other subsystems that could not be easily resolved. A system that could neither load nor run an application received a failing grade of E.

Grades range from A—complete software compatibility—to E—complete incompatibility.

	 DOOM II	 Magic School Bus	 Myst	 OS/2 Warp	 PC Magazine CD	 Star Trek
AcerAcros Pentium Minitower	A	A	D	E	A	A
AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p	A	A	A	A	A	B
Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC	A	A	D	E	A	A
IBM Aptiva 730	A	B	A	A	A	A
Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000	A	A	A	A	A	A
Micron P90 Home MPC	A	A	D	A	A	A
NEC Ready 9510	A	A	A	E	A	A
Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium	A	A	A	A	A	A
USA Flex PT-75 MultiMedia Classic	B	D	B	E	A	A

After Hours: PC Magazine At Home

the remaining five systems (the AcerAcros Pentium Minitower, AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p, Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC, Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium, and USA Flex PT-75 MultiMedia Classic) all use 75-MHz Pentium chips. On our tests, the performance differences among the various chip types and systems proved to be small.

Multimedia itself has also taken a turn, or rather a spin, for the better. Five of the nine systems include quad-speed CD-ROM drives, and several include wavetable audio boards. And say goodbye to those tiny, tinny speakers shipped with most multimedia PCs. The home PCs in this review may not produce audiophile-level sound, but most boast larger, more powerful speakers.

You'll also hear a lot more phones ringing on home PCs this year. Six of these systems include telephony capabilities, including voice mail, speakerphones, and even voice recognition.

Of course, nothing says *home PC* like preloaded software. The bundled titles included with these systems provide a thoughtful mix of programs designed to appeal to an entire household. Five of the systems include a Windows front end, ranging from the Spartan "Your Software" directory structure of the IBM Aptiva 730 to the everything-in-a-folder approach of the AcerAcros Pentium Minitower's A.C.E. front end or the virtual living-room metaphor employed by Microsoft Bob and bundled with the Micron P90 Home MPC and the NEC Ready 9510. The Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium's 25-plus titles put it at the top of the list, but no system bundled fewer than 10 titles.

To make this bounty easier to set up and use, all the systems include some sort of setup guide. Many of the systems take easy setup even further by labeling ports and designing cases for quick access. Packard Bell provides the most help in this arena, by color-coding cables, labeling ports, and providing a poster that clearly delineates the setup process.

Our Contributors: ALICE HILL is a senior technical editor for *Computer Life*. HENRY NORR is editor emeritus of *MacWEEK*. GAYLE C. EHRENMAN was the associate editor in charge of this story, and WILLIAM P. FLANAGAN, a staff writer at *PC Magazine*, was the project leader.

Micron P90 Home MPC

The nine machines in this roundup offer a superior mix of ease of use, processing power, and bundled software, but none provides as much to serve both novice and experienced home users as the Micron

P90 Home MPC. This system combines high performance, expandability, and ease of use with a solid software bundle—all at a reasonable \$2,599 list price. Since it also has a 90-MHz Pentium and an 812MB hard disk, you'll probably be in no rush to upgrade; but when the time is ripe, you'll find plenty of room.

The Micron P90 is no slouch when it comes to the out-of-box experience, either. Its quick-start setup guide clearly points out everything you need to know to get up and running in a hurry. The system should have no problem running your applications either. On our software-compatibility tests, it ran all the applications but *Myst*. To make the computing experience painless for even the most phobic

of home PC users, the Micron P90 bundles Microsoft Bob, which combines a Windows front end with a series of applications to turn your desktop into a virtual home. Factor in Micron Computer's strong showing on our Service and Reliability survey—a top grade of A—and you have a system that's hard to beat.

The Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium earns honorable mention for going the extra mile toward user-friendliness. Its illustrated setup poster, color-coded ports and cables, and custom Windows front end make setting up and using the system as un-intimidating as possible. Its 26 bundled software titles ensure that there's something for everyone.



HOW WE TESTED

To help make your buying decision easier, we put these machines through a rigorous set of tests. In addition to a suite of PC Magazine Labs performance tests, we performed a series of compatibility tests to see how well the systems could run some popular (though technically demanding) games and applications. We also performed subjective sound-quality tests to see how well the systems' sound cards and speakers could reproduce .WAV, MIDI, and analog audio files. Finally, we scored each of the systems according to seven criteria vital to home users: setup, bundled software, performance, sound, upgradability, service and reliability, and overall value.

So what is the essence of a home PC today? Think of it as raw capability wrapped in mature technology: a

second-generation Pentium, a quad-speed CD-ROM, a higher-quality sound board, and a more powerful set of speakers. The ideal home PC is also an inviting system that guides the novice user, yet gives the power user room to expand. And it does all of this without breaking the bank. In short, home is where the best PC is.

Acer America Corp.

AcerAcros Pentium Minitower

What's the fastest way to distinguish yourself from the pack? Paint everything black. With an all-black color scheme that carries through to the mouse and speakers, Acer America Corp.'s \$2,399 AcerAcros Pentium Minitower is definitely eye-catching. But looks aren't enough to ensure success, and this 75-MHz machine is often just a pretty face when it comes to performance.

Newcomers will appreciate the way Acer organizes manuals and documenta-

After Hours: PC Magazine At Home

REPORT CARDS

Reading the Report Card

Performance tests don't tell the whole story when it comes to home PCs. The features discussed below also distinguish one home system from the next, and often mean the difference between pleasure and pain for home PC users. We graded each of the systems in seven categories important to home users. The grades we used and their meanings are as follows: *A*, significantly above average; *B*, above average; *C*, average; *D*, below average; *E*, failing.

Setup focuses on how much setup assistance is provided for new users. Posters detailing how to get started, introductory videos, tutorials, color-coded cables, clearly labeled ports, and a Windows front end all help earn extra points for a system.

For the **software** category, we assess both the quantity and quality of the software shipped with a system. To earn a good grade here, a system must include a range of useful titles spanning the home-productivity, reference, entertainment, and education categories.

Performance is where we focus on the power and stability of the hardware. We consider processor performance, video performance, and the performance of the CD-ROM drive. We also take into consideration how well a system performed on our

application-specific out-of-box software-compatibility tests.

The **sound** category involves how well a system fared on our subjective sound tests. Here we assess the quality of the sound board and bundled speakers when playing analog sound, .WAV, and MIDI files. To earn a good grade here, a system must play all three sound types clearly without distortion.

Upgradability indicates how easy it is to upgrade the various components of a system. We consider the number of available drive bays and slots, as well as how easy it is to get to them. The design and layout of the system are critical.

We derive the grades for **service and reliability** from *PC Magazine's* 1995 Service and Reliability survey (January 10, 1995). In this survey, readers rated PC vendors on three key measures—satisfaction with reliability, technical support, and repair experience. To earn a grade of *A*, a vendor's scores on each of these three measures had to be significantly above the overall average.

Overall value encompasses all of the above, factored against the price of the system. To earn high marks here, a system must offer easy setup, a good selection of useful software, strong hardware performance, a high-quality sound system, lots of room for expansion, and a solid service and reliability record—all at a competitive price.

tion into bags labeled by categories, including Communications and Multimedia. But Acer's setup poster, though informative and attractive, has no information on the mini-tower version we reviewed.

What really distinguishes the AcerAcros is ACE (Acer Computer Explorer), an excellent user shell that neatly organizes Windows applets and bundled applications into groups such as Communications and Reference. Unlike other shells, ACE doesn't mask Windows entirely; it simply reorganizes everything into groups one is less likely to get lost in.

The AcerAcros had some of the lowest DOSMark and Winstone 95 scores

among 75-MHz Pentium-based machines, and with its Mitsumi IDE CD-ROM drive, it finished near the bottom on our CD-ROM tests. The 1.2GB Seagate hard disk may not be the speediest, but it is one

of the largest to be found among the home PCs in this roundup. This roomy mini-tower gives users plenty of upgrade space, including two available 3.5-inch drive bays, two 5.25-inch bays, two free ISA slots, and one PCI slot.

The sound quality of the machine proved to be less impressive. The AcerAcros turned in below-average performance on our subjective sound tests. This was largely due to the tiny, throwaway speakers bundled with the system.



The AcerAcros Pentium Minitower includes the excellent, easy-to-use ACE Windows shell.

Acer's sound software is more impressive. The audio software makes it easy to play music and sound samples, but audiophiles will have to buy serious speakers before they're satisfied with the sound performance.

Acer's telephony offerings are rather impressive. The powerful SuperVoice package turns the AcerPower telephony board into a voice mail system that's fairly straightforward to customize and use. In addition to the sound and telephony software, the system includes America Online, Microsoft Encarta '95, Microsoft Works, NetCruiser, Prodigy, Quicken, and a handful of games—all preloaded.

The look of the AcerAcros Pentium Minitower (and of ACE) is certainly unique. If only the system's performance were as strong!—AH

► **AcerAcros Pentium Minitower.** List price: \$2,399. Acer America Corp., San Jose, CA; 800-368-2237, 408-432-6200; fax, 408-922-2953.

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AST Research Inc.

AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p

The \$2,399 AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p manages to fit a fair number of interesting features into a tidy slimline case. This 75-MHz Pentium system combines a powerful front end, AST Works, with an impressive telephony subsystem and a well-balanced selection of software to create a total package that

REPORT CARD	
AcerAcros Pentium Minitower	
Setup	A
Software	B
Performance	C
Sound	D
Upgradability	B
Service and reliability	B
Overall value	B

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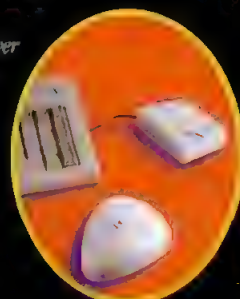
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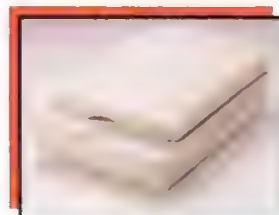
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Benchmark Tests: Home PCs

The nine home PCs we tested were based on Pentium processors with speeds ranging from 60 to 90 MHz. Though the processor types varied, overall system performance varied little.

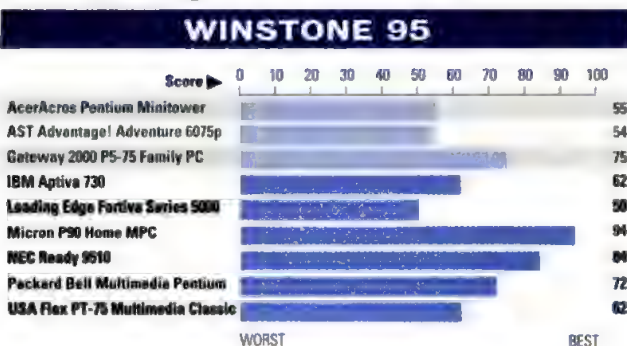
What the Numbers Mean

WINSTONE 95

The two fastest systems were the Micron P90 Home MPC and the NEC Ready 9510, each based on a Pentium/90 chip and each running Microsoft Windows for Workgroups 3.11. The slowest systems were the Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000 and the AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p. The AST unit lacked an L2 cache, which put it at a disadvantage on some tests. The Fortiva 5000 suffered from slow video and disk subsystems.

DOSMARK

In the DOS arena, the processor type greatly influenced how well a system performed. For this reason, the 90-MHz systems turned in much higher scores than the 60-MHz machines.



How We Tested

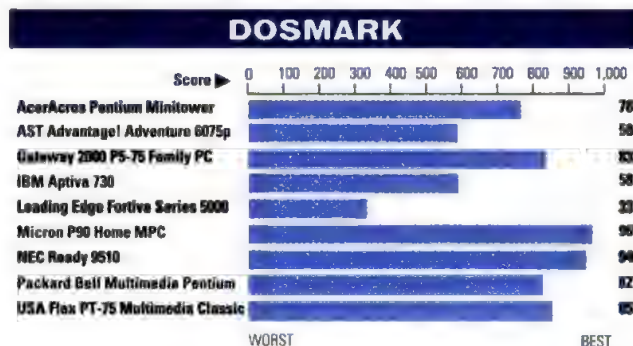
For all tests, we enabled the latest version of SMARTDRV.EXE provided on the tested system. We also used a cache size of 2MB, with write-behind caching enabled. For systems running Microsoft Windows for Workgroups, we set up a file cache of 2MB. We directed Windows to use a 20MB permanent swap file but did not change the vendor's setting for 32-bit disk access.

We used the custom graphics drivers for provided graphics chip sets and set resolution to 800-by-600 with 256 colors and small fonts.

We used our benchmark test suite **Winstone 95**, Version 1.0, to measure the machines' performance when running typical Windows applications. Winstone 95 measures the time a PC takes to execute a set of scripts that exercise 13 of the best-selling Windows 3.1 applications. Winstone weights a given PC's test timings based on the applications' unit market shares; it derives a composite number and converts it to a relative score (relative to the performance of a 386DX/25 Compaq Deskpro/M with 4MB of RAM, whose score is defined as 10). Winstone also produces system performance scores in four categories: word processing, spreadsheet, database, and business graphics/desktop publishing.

PC Bench 9.0 predicts processor, video, and disk performance under DOS applications. A composite PC Bench score, the **DOSMark**, is a summary of those three results that reflects overall system performance under DOS.

We also used two tests from Microsoft Corp.'s VidTest—a Windows-based, digital video performance test program—to evaluate CD-ROM performance. We used VidTest's Data Streaming test to determine CD-ROM maximum throughput and CD-ROM CPU utilization (results not shown).



should appeal to novice users.

Setting up the Adventure 6075p is a simple procedure, thanks to clearly la-



The AST Works Windows front end makes the Adventure 6075p easy to use, even for novices.

beled ports on the back of the machine. No setup poster is included with the system, though. AST Works, a customizable Windows front end, makes using the machine easy for even the most inexperienced of users. This software combines instructional videos and system information with intuitive program categories organized under headings such as Communications, Finance, and Reference.

The Adventure 6075p is easy for novices to use, but it doesn't offer the most impressive performance. This system turned in the worst DOSMark and Winstone 95 scores among the 75-MHz Pentium systems. The perfor-

mance of its Toshiba quad-speed CD-ROM drive was more impressive. The Adventure 6075p also ranked near the

top on our subjective sound tests; it includes a surprisingly good set of speakers made by AST.

The unit is definitely lacking in expansion capability. The Adventure 6075p includes a five-slot riser board with only one PCI and one ISA slot open. In addition, just one 3.5-inch and one 5.25-inch drive bay are available.

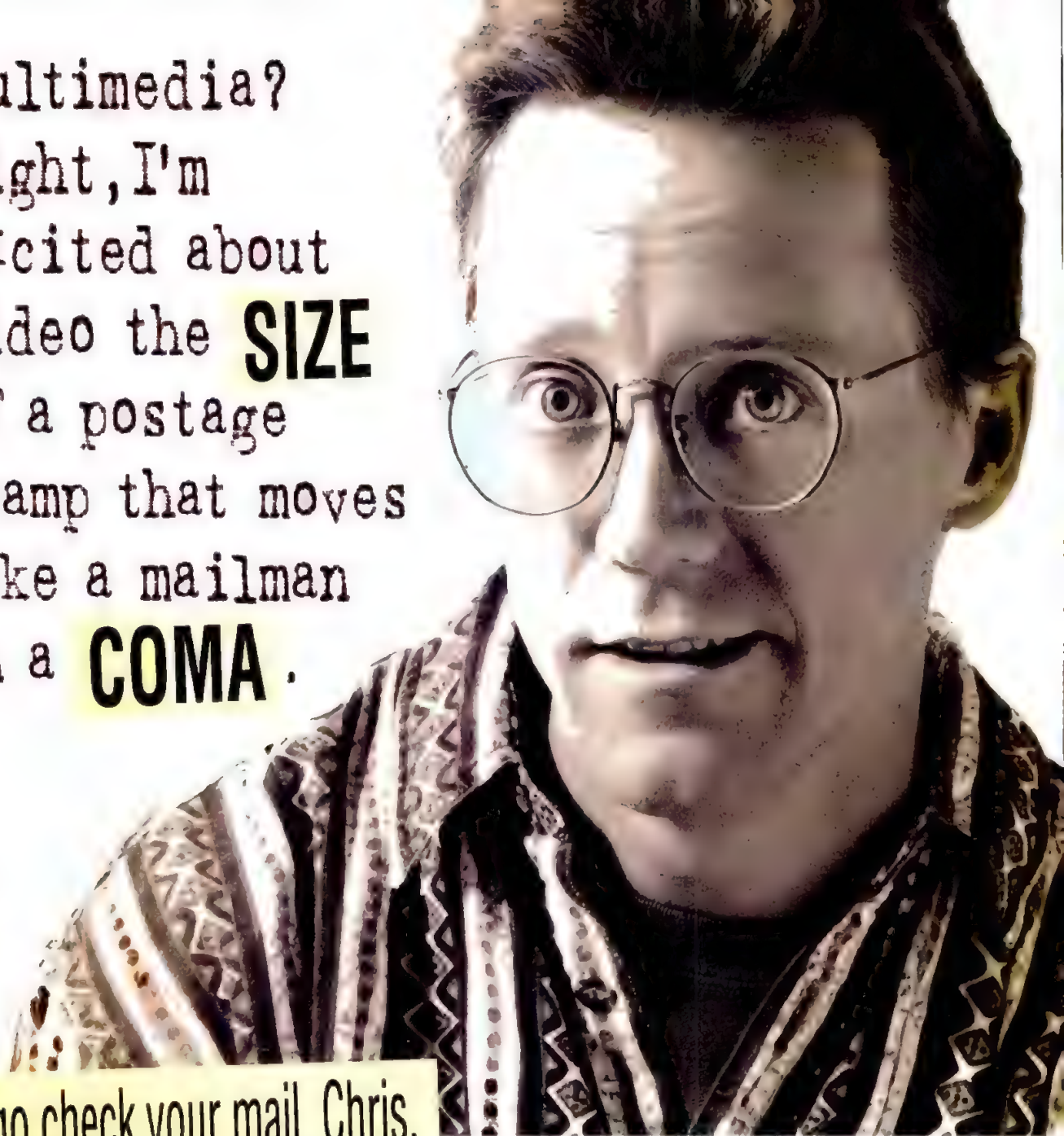
Where the Adventure 6075p distinguishes itself is in its powerful telephony capability. The AST StarCom telephony package is easy to configure and functions

REPORT CARD

AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p

Setup	A
Software	A
Performance	C
Sound	B
Upgradability	C
Service and reliability	C
Overall value	B

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as a full-fledged speakerphone; you can also link directly to Lotus Organizer, which comes preinstalled. The Adventure 6075p also comes with a microphone for issuing voice commands. No other telephony-oriented system we saw was as rich in features as this AST offering.

The selection of bundled software is equally impressive. There are more than 15 titles to choose from, including America Online, Microsoft Encarta '95, Microsoft Works, Prodigy, and Quicken, as well as some games.

As a final note, beware of the on/off switch. The round button is easy to spot and access but too easily triggered. Despite this quirk, the AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p is a well-rounded machine that's a good choice.—AH

► **AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p.** List price: \$2,399. AST Research Inc., Irvine, CA; 800-876-4278, 714-727-4141; fax, 800-926-1278.

Circle 442 on reader service card

Gateway 2000 Inc.

Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC

The sticker on the front of the case says "Family PC," but the first time you turn on the \$2,299 Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC, you'll find there's not much of anything running on the system to live up to that claim. What you will find inside the box is a solid-performing 75-MHz Pentium system, good peripherals, and a useful selection of bundled software ready to install.

Though setup is easy, you will have to roll up your sleeves and get to work before you can enjoy the various titles and extras that Gateway 2000 includes. Everything is so clearly labeled and documented, though, that the task is hardly cumbersome. Open the bag marked "Family" and you'll find a colorful, easy-to-follow setup manual that makes getting started a fairly painless proposition. Novices expecting a front end or tutorial will be disappointed, however.

Gateway pushed the value



The Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC turned in some of the best scores on our tests.

bar a notch higher by including a Mitsumi quad-speed CD-ROM drive and an excellent set of Altec Lansing speakers that proved to be among the best on our subjective sound tests.

The Gateway P5-75 finished with one of the top DOSMark scores for 75-MHz systems and turned in the best performance of that group on our Winstone 95 tests. Its CD-ROM drive also performed well on our tests.

There is space aplenty for games and other software on the ample Western Digital 696MB hard disk. When it's time to expand the system, the Gateway P5-75's roomy desktop case is up for virtually anything; there are three free ISA slots, two available PCI slots, and two 5.25-inch drive bays. There's even room above the power-supply area for more peripherals, but you'll need to buy a mounting bracket before you try this.

REPORT CARD

Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC

Setup	B
Software	B
Performance	A
Sound	B
Upgradability	A
Service and reliability	A
Overall value	B

Gateway offers a decent selection of software titles from Microsoft, including Cinemania '95, Encarta '95, Fine Artist, Microsoft Golf, and Microsoft Works. The fax modem was installed and ready to go, but you'll have to scour up your own on-line connections; the Gateway P5-75 doesn't in-

clude any on-line software.

In fact, with no shells, preloaded software (beyond Cinemania), or extras such as a microphone or joystick, the Gateway P5-75 seems better suited to experienced home users than to novices. Still, the quality components and overall value make this one well worth considering.—AH

► **Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC.** List price: \$2,299. Gateway 2000 Inc., North Sioux City, SD; 800-846-2000, 605-232-2000; fax, 605-232-2023.

Circle 443 on reader service card

IBM Personal Computer Co.

IBM Aptiva 730

The \$2,794 IBM Aptiva 730 is definitely of the hide-it-away slimline school, where even the floppy disk and CD-ROM drives are concealed by a drop-down front panel. This makes for a tidy appearance and small footprint, but this 60-MHz Pentium machine doesn't add enough ease-of-use features to be truly attractive to the novice user and doesn't provide enough power and

pandability for the experienced user. Instead, the Aptiva 730 takes the middle road.

Based on the amount of wrangling needed to get the tiny case open, it's clear that this is a machine designed for those who prefer to let someone else work under the hood. Once users get the machine running, they'll find a simple start-up menu that launches Microsoft Windows; from there, IBM creates a special window labeled AptivaWare. In it, you can launch tutorials from the Learning Library, explore the Custom Tools, and run programs from the enhanced directory tree entitled Your Software.

Slimline cases are cursed with minimal expansion capacity, and the Aptiva 730 offered the smallest number of expansion options in our roundup: only one 3.5-inch drive bay and one expansion slot that can be used for either an ISA or a PCI board.

Fortunately, IBM chose some excellent components to cut down your need for immediate expansion: a roomy IBM 726MB hard disk, an Aria 16-bit wave-table sound card, speakers that placed

REPORT CARD

IBM Aptiva 730

Setup	A
Software	C
Performance	C
Sound	B
Upgradability	D
Service and reliability	A
Overall value	C

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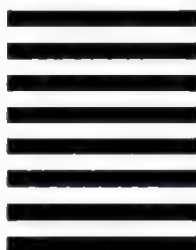
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The IBM Aptiva 730 includes good components but a below-par collection of bundled software.

near the top on our sound tests, a Mitsumi double-speed IDE CD-ROM drive, and on-board graphics built around the S3 Vision 864 chip set.

Though the Aptiva 730 is no slouch in its collection of parts and accessories, neither is it a standout performer. For one thing, the Aptiva 730 relies on the older, 60-MHz Pentium for processing power and is one of the few systems bundling Windows 3.1 in place of the more efficient Windows for Workgroups 3.11. The system did produce better DOSMark and

Winstone 95 scores than the other 60-MHz machine in this roundup. Its Winstone score was higher than that turned in by some of the 75-MHz machines, proving that the Aptiva 730 is a more-than-adequate all-around Windows machine. Its CD-ROM drive fared better than most other double-speed drives on our CD-ROM tests.

This system doesn't offer much in terms of software, though. Knowledge Adventure's The Discoverers, PFS:WindowWorks, and Quicken make up the bulk of the goodies. The Aptiva 730 does come ready to dial in to America Online and Prodigy, and includes PED Software's Journalist, a tool that allows you to customize Prodigy downloads. The Aptiva 730 also includes a special task automator that will let the machine turn on at a prescribed time to send a fax or collect your e-mail. These extras are innovative, but in a field where above-average performance and bundled extras rule the day, the Aptiva 730 seems a bit outdated.—AH

► **IBM Aptiva 730.** List price: \$2,794. IBM Personal Computer Co., Somers, NY; 800-426-3377.

Circle 444 on reader service card

Leading Edge Products Inc.

Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000

The \$2,659 Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000 distinguishes itself from the rest of the systems in this roundup only by its sheer lack of distinction. The most notable features of the 60-MHz Pentium-based Fortiva 5000 are easy setup and a good assortment of bundled software. But these features can be found in almost all the units in this group, most of which offer better performance for your money.

To assist new users in setting up the system, the Fortiva 5000 includes a poster-size guide and labeled ports on the back of the PC. Though the system doesn't include a custom Windows front end, it does go directly to Windows on boot-up. In Windows, users will appreciate the somewhat hard-to-locate but useful tutorial.

The Fortiva 5000 is a standard desktop system with average expansion capabilities. The 1GB Western Digital hard disk will hold off desires to upgrade for quite a while. Should you feel the need to expand, you'll find one 5.25-inch drive bay still available, as well as one free ISA slot and two PCI slots.

On our benchmark tests, the Fortiva 5000 generally performed near the bot-

The Macintosh Option: The Performa 6110

Henry Norr

who love Macs really love Macs. feed them all the propaganda about how fast a 90-MHz show much more software Windows-based PCs, and wiper PCs are, but they these people, there is me d Macintosh Performa's answer to the more computer. same in a variety of Powh share the App their heart is a oriery processor past Yts business- re for the Apple,

IBM, and Motorola, the PowerPC is based on RISC (reduced instruction-set computing), a performance-boosting technology previously available only in high-priced workstations.

The Performa 6110 models each include 8MB of RAM, a double-speed tray-loading CD-ROM drive (the Apple 300i), high-speed SCSI ports, a floppy disk drive that can read PC or Mac disks, Ethernet networking capabilities, 16-bit stereo sound, a 15-inch monitor with built-in stereo speakers, and an external 14.4-Kbps fax modem. The only difference among models is the size of the hard disk. You can get models with 250MB, 350MB, or 500MB.

With its 60-MHz PowerPC 601, the Performa 6110 doesn't quite match 90- and 100-MHz Pentium systems. And ranging from about \$2,400 to \$2,700, a Performa 6110 may cost a bit more than some Pentium systems. But if you want a Mac, this is the way to go.

If you do opt for the Performa, you won't lack for software. For starters, you get System 7.5—the latest version of the Mac operating system. It's packed with Windows 95-like features such as longer file names and drag-and-drop. Most Performa 6110s also include ClarisWorks, Quicken, on-line software, and a variety of reference and entertainment titles. □

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The Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000 includes a strong selection of hardware.

tom of the pack. On our DOS Video tests, the ATI mach32 graphics accelerator helped the system post a score competitive with that of the IBM Aptiva 730, the only other 60-MHz Pentium in this roundup. The Fortiva 5000's DOSMark and Winstone 95 scores were both lower than those of the IBM system. And the Fortiva 5000 fared below average on our subjective sound tests, primarily because of the speakers included with the system.

When it comes to software, the Fortiva 5000 offers a more enticing package. Leading Edge includes preinstalled access to America Online, CompuServe, GENie, and Prodigy, as well as InterNav—Delphi's Internet access software. The bundle includes some interesting applications, such as Interactive Publishing's Infopedia for reference, GameTek's Star Crusader for fun, and Microsoft Works and Money to enhance home productivity.

Though the software selection and start-up aids might make the Fortiva 5000 attractive to novice users, those interested in performance would do well to look elsewhere.—William P. Flanagan

► **Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000.** List price: \$2,659. Leading Edge Computer Products Inc., Westborough, MA; 800-874-3340, 508-836-4800; fax, 508-836-4504.

Circle 445 on reader service card

Micron Computer Inc.

Micron P90 Home MPC



For a combination of solid performance, expandability, and ease of use, it's hard to top the \$2,599 Micron P90 Home MPC. This 90-MHz Pentium-based system offers the solid performance that experienced users demand, coupled with the easy setup and useful software that novices require.

The Micron P90 tips its hat to beginners with a plain but surprisingly thorough quick-start setup card. The black-and-white diagrams are spare but point out all the ports and everything you need to get the system started. Then there's Microsoft Bob, without question the most elaborate Windows front end currently available for the computer newcomer. This friendly front end, which includes built-in applications, transforms your desktop into a home environment with rooms, sizable furniture, and individual family names and passwords for added security.

With the Micron P90, Micron packs some pretty impressive peripherals into a roomy mini-tower case that you can easily open and close with a single large thumbscrew. From the 90-MHz Pentium CPU that drives the system to the double-speed Sony IDE CD-ROM drive, and from the fast Diamond Stealth 64 DRAM video card to the roomy yet nimble 812MB hard disk from Conner, the Micron is without question our dream system from a hardware point of view.

There's also a lot of room to grow in the Micron P90's mini-tower case. Three open ISA slots, two PCI slots, three full 5.25-inch drive bays and one 3.5-inch bay mean there's a place for anything you

want to put inside this PC. The only middle-of-the-road side to the Micron P90 is its KOSS speaker system.

While its sound performance was below average on our subjective sound tests, the Micron P90 proved to be a stellar performer in all other regards. Both its DOSMark and Winstone 95 scores were the highest of all the machines tested in this roundup. It also scored above average on our CD-ROM tests.

Though it may seem as if this system doesn't include much software, looks can be deceiving. Microsoft Bob includes a number of useful applications, including a Letter Writer, a Household Manager, a Checkbook, a Calendar, and E-Mail that allows you to connect to several of the leading online services. For those who favor more traditional applications, the system also includes Microsoft Works and Quicken. In addition, all the system software is provided on a single CD-ROM, so you won't have any trouble keeping track of your key software.

The combination of home-style soft-

REPORT CARD

Micron P90 Home MPC

Setup	A
Software	A
Performance	A
Sound	C
Upgradability	A
Service and reliability	A
Overall value	A



The Micron P90 Home PC combines powerful hardware with a well-rounded software bundle.

ware and sheer performance makes the Micron P90 Home MPC hard to beat.—AH

► **Micron P90 Home MPC.** List price: \$2,599. Micron Computer Inc., Nampa, ID; 800-388-6334, 208-465-3434; fax, 208-465-3424.

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C. Jeffrey, C. Jeffrey Eng.

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After Hours: PC Magazine At Home

SUMMARY OF FEATURES

Home PCs

PC MAGAZINE
EDITORS' CHOICE

■ YES ■ NO

Products listed in alphabetical order

	AcerAcros Pentium Minitower	AST Advantage! Adventure 6075p	Gateway 2000 P5-75 Family PC	IBM Aptiva 730	Leading Edge Fortiva Series 5000	Micron P90 Home MPC	NEC Ready 9510
List price (tested configuration)	\$2,399	\$2,399	\$2,299	\$2,794	\$2,659	\$2,599	\$3,054
Processor	Pentium/75	Pentium/75	Pentium/75	Pentium/60	Pentium/60	Pentium/90	Pentium/90
Installed/maximum motherboard RAM	8MB, 128MB	8MB, 128MB	8MB, 128MB	8MB, 128MB	8MB, 64MB	8MB, 128MB	16MB, 128MB
Installed/maximum external RAM cache	256K, 256K	None, none	256K, 256K	256K, 256K	256K, 1MB	256K, 256MB	256K, 256MB
Motherboard manufacturer	Acer	AST	Intel	IBM	Daewoo	Micronics	NEC
Chip set manufacturer	Intel	VLSI	Intel	VLSI	OPTi	VLSI	SIS
BIOS manufacturer and version (or date)	Acer V20R02CD	AST 1.04	AMI100.11AX1	IBM 2.01-01J	Phoenix 4.0	Phoenix 4.04	Phoenix 4.04
Flash BIOS/16550 UART chip	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■
Expansion slots	5 ISA, 3 PCI	3 ISA, 2 PCI	5 ISA, 3 PCI	3 ISA, 2 PCI	5 ISA, 3 PCI	6 ISA, 2 PCI	4 ISA, 2 PCI
Parallel, serial, mouse ports	1, 2, 1	1, 2, 1	1, 2, 1	1, 2, 1	1, 2, 1	1, 2, 1	1, 2, 1
Graphics adapter (and memory)	Cirrus Logic CL-GD5434 (2MB)	Cirrus Logic CL-GD5430 (1MB)	STB S3 TRI064 (2MB)	S3 Vision864 (1MB)	ATI Mach32 (1MB)	Diamond Stealth S3 Trio 64 (2MB)	Cirrus Logic CL-GD5434 (2MB)
Hard disk capacity and interface	1.2GB IDE	514MB IDE	686MB IDE	726MB IDE	1.03GB IDE	812MB IDE	1.2GB IDE
CD-ROM drive (and speed)	Mitsumi (4x)	Toshiba (4x)	Mitsumi (4x)	IBM (Mitsumi) (2x)	Aztech (2x)	Sony (2x)	Mitsumi (4x)
Speakers	Acer	AST (Quickshot)	Altec Lansing	Jazz Hipstar	Hi-Tex	KOSS	Labtec
Audio/Microphone/Headphones	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■
Modem/Telephony/Radio	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■
Setup poster/Getting-started video	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■
Windows front end	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Labeled ports/Color-coded cables	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■
Accessible drive bays (5.25", 3.5")	3, 2	2, 1	3, 1	1, 1	2, 1	3, 1	3, 1
Internal drive bays (5.25", 3.5")	0, 2	0, 1	0, 3	0, 2	0, 1	0, 2	0, 2
Power supply (and number of connectors)	200W (8)	145W (4)	145W (6)	145W (4)	200W (6)	200W (6)	200W (4)
Monitor manufacturer (and diagonal screen size)	Acer (15")	Daewoo (15")	Sony (15")	IBM (14")	Daewoo (14")	Micron (15")	NEC (15")
System software	DOS 6.22, WinVWG 3.11	DOS 6.22, Windows 3.10	DOS 6.22, WinVWG 3.11	PC DOS 6.3, Windows 3.10	DOS 6.22, Windows 3.10	DOS 6.22, WinVWG 3.11	DOS 6.22, WinVWG 3.11
Dealers/Direct-distribution channel	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■
Warranty on parts and labor	3 years	3 years	3 years parts, 1 year labor	3 year	3 years carry-in, 1 year on-site	1 year	3 years
On-site service (1 year)	Included	Included	Included	Included	Varies	Included	Included

NEC Technologies Inc.

NEC Ready 9510

It's a server. It's a slimline. No, it's the \$3,054 NEC Ready 9510, a 90-MHz Pentium system that positions itself as a home PC but isn't designed like one. Though it proved to be a capable performer on our benchmark tests, the Ready 9510 displays a distinct split personality when it comes to design and functionality.

Nothing is labeled on the back of the Ready 9510. Your best guess is about all there is when you're trying to identify keyboard ports and COM ports. This can be very disconcerting when the time comes to plug things in, particularly for those used to buying clearly labeled hardware. And you can forget about easy expansion-board installation; the Ready 9510 hangs a riser card upside down inside the oversize mini-tower case, and the only way to add any sort of board is to disman-

tle the bottom of the unit—something you'll probably try only after needlessly taking off the giant cover. This is hardly the sort of design we expect in a home PC.



The unusual design of the NEC Ready 9510 makes it tough for novice users to expand the system.

Still, the Ready 9510 doesn't totally ignore novice users. As a nod to this audience, the system includes Microsoft Bob, a package that features a graphical, friendly Windows front end with integrated applications.

In terms of performance, the NEC Ready fared well, posting second-place DOSMark and Winstone 95 scores and managing excellent performance on our CD-ROM tests. This decidedly impressive accomplishment is largely due to its 90-MHz Pentium and excellent component mix, which includes a Mitsumi quad-speed CD-ROM drive, a massive 1.2-gigabyte hard disk from Conner, and an adequate sound system (with better-than-average Labtec speakers). Once you get in the case, you'll find four free ISA and two free PCI slots, along with a fair number of

After Hours: PC Magazine At Home

Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium

\$2,000
Pentium/75
8MB, 136MB
256K, 256K
Packard Bell
Intel
AMI 1.0012 BBOR
■ ■
3 ISA, 2 PCI
1, 1, 1
Cirrus Logic
CL-GD5434 (1MB)
812MB IDE
Matsushita (2x)
Packard Bell
■ ■ ■
■ ■ ■
■ ■
■ ■
■ ■
2, 1
0, 1
150W (4)
Packard Bell (15")
DOS 6.22,
WWG 3.11
■ ■
1 year
Included

USA Flex PT-75 MultiMedia Classic

\$2,389
Pentium/75
8MB, 128MB
256K, 256K
Intel
AMI 100.12AX1
■ ■
5 ISA, 3 PCI
1, 2, 0
Diamond Stealth
S3 Trio64 (2MB)
814MB IDE
Mitsumi (4x)
Micro Innovations
■ ■ ■
■ ■ ■
■ ■
■ ■
■ ■
3, 2
0, 1
200W (4)
CTX (15")
DOS 6.22,
WWG 3.11
■ ■
3 years parts,
lifetime labor
\$49

assorted drive bays.

When you turn on the system, you'll find a carefully selected set of software. This set includes a customized version of Microsoft Bob, which loads icons of NEC's phone/answering machine and stereo programs right in the Bob living room. Also available is a better-than-average telephony setup, which includes a highly usable speakerphone and a microphone.

For those who prefer standard Windows, the Ready 9510 includes a home-office program group, where there are preloaded copies of Encarta '95, Microsoft Works, Paint Shop Deluxe, Quicken, TurboTax, and a title from Brøderbund's Living Books series. For those eager to expand into the on-line world, NEC Technologies includes preloaded software for all of the major on-line services, including America Online, CompuServe, Prodigy, Sierra Online's ImagiNation Network, and even NetCruiser.

What makes the Ready 9510 so unusual is the way it combines software that's appealing to novices with a case design that clearly does not belong in the home. This system may not be ready for novice home users until NEC refines the design.—AH

► **NEC Ready 9510.** List price: \$3,054. NEC Technologies Inc., Boxborough, MA; 800-632-4636, 508-264-8000; fax, 508-264-8673.

Circle 448 on reader service card

Packard Bell Inc.

Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium

With more than 20 bundled titles, setup that couldn't be easier, and solid performance, Packard Bell really goes the extra mile toward making a person's first foray into computing an enjoyable experience. Novices will appreciate the \$2,000 Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium's easy setup, while seasoned users will appreciate the competitive performance of the 75-MHz Pentium CPU.

On opening the box, you'll see the setup poster, which contains pictures and diagrams as well as Packard Bell's 800 number and directions on how to reach the company on CompuServe and Prodigy (both of which come preloaded on the system). Packard Bell goes one step further by color-coding all the ports and the respective cables.

Once the system is on, the user enters Packard Bell's Navigator software, a custom front end to Windows that provides easy access to all installed applications and serves as a tutor for new users. From here the user can launch and control the unit's telephony features, which include a telephone and answering machine.

Inside its desktop-size case, the Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium features a riser-card design, which limits the amount of expansion room. There are, however, two ISA slots and one

REPORT CARD

NEC Ready 9510

Setup	D
Software	A
Performance	A
Sound	C
Upgradability	C
Service and reliability	C
Overall value	C

PCI slot still available to the user. Only one 5.25-inch drive bay is still available, but the 812MB Seagate hard disk should hold off the need for additional storage for some time.

On our performance tests, the Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium

proved itself competitive in both the Windows and DOS arenas. The system's DOSMark and Winstone 95 scores were better than average for the 75-MHz systems in this review. On our CD-ROM tests, the unit's Matsushita drive performed satisfactorily. The system's sound capabilities were only average; the integrated speakers, which are bolted to the sides of the monitor, are an attractive design feature, but they fail to provide the most competitive sound quality.

The large selection of software bundled with the Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium runs the gamut from productivity packages such as Microsoft Works and Money to reference titles such as Sports Illustrated's Almanac and the U.S. and World Atlas.

There are also a number of games and interesting children's titles. For further peace of mind, a system CD is also included.

REPORT CARD

Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium

Setup	A
Software	A
Performance	B
Sound	C
Upgradability	C
Service and reliability	E
Overall value	B



The Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium offers the most software of all the systems in this roundup.

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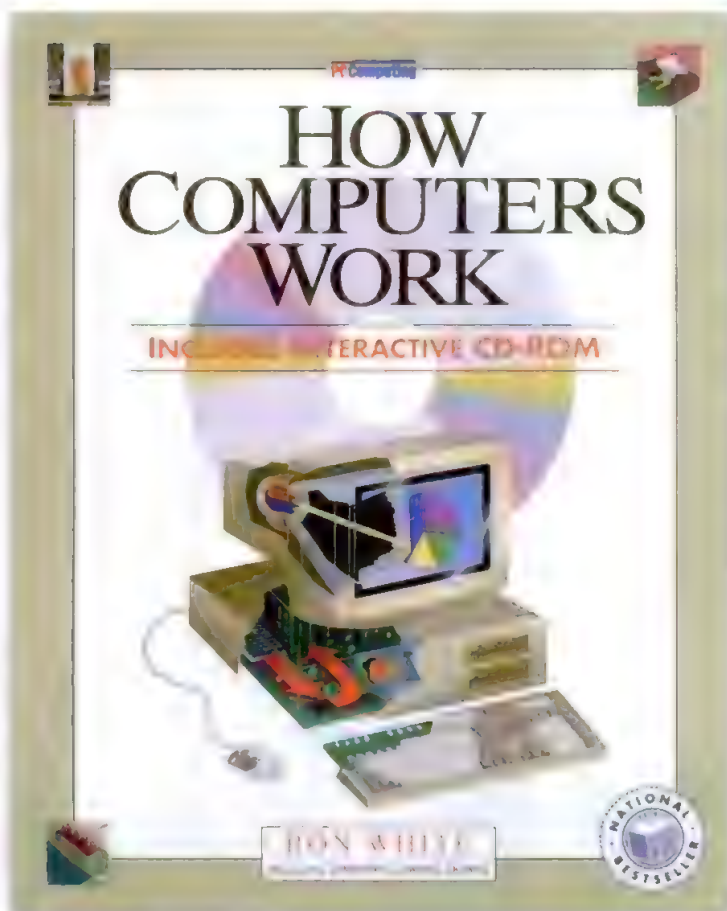


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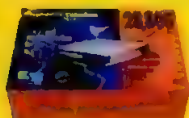


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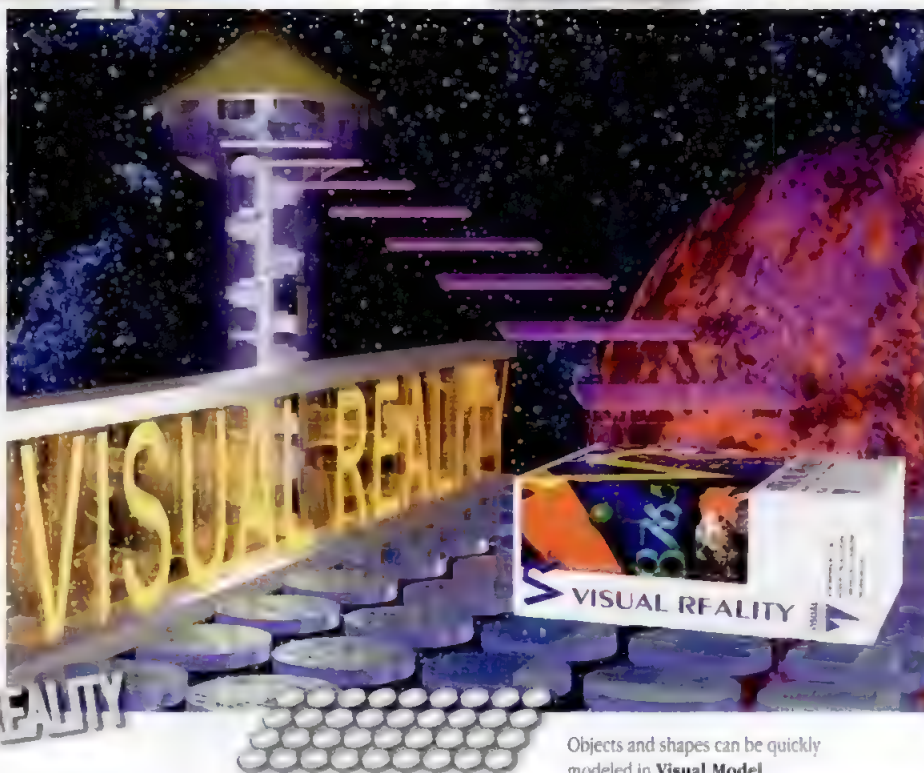


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VB Power



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The combination of easy setup, strong performance, and ample selection of bundled software makes the Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium a smart investment.—WPF

► **Packard Bell Multimedia Pentium.** List price: \$2,000. Packard Bell Electronics Inc., Westlake Village, CA; 800-733-5858, 818-865-1555; fax, 801-579-0092.

Circle 448 on reader service card

USA Flex

USA Flex PT-75 MultiMedia Classic

The \$2,389 USA Flex PT-75 MultiMedia Classic offers an overwhelming array of materials. There are more than 14 software titles, 12 manuals, and 7 system disks included with the unit. You clearly won't have to run to the software store after setting up this 75-MHz Pentium PC. And actually getting the system up and running for the first time should prove to be no burden; setup instructions are clear and easy to follow. USA Flex does little else for the novice, however: The system doesn't provide a Windows front end or any on-line tutorials.

The hardware selection inside the machine is almost as appealing as the software selection. In outfitting the machine,

USA Flex went all out, equipping it with a Mitsumi quad-speed CD-ROM drive, a roomy Seagate 814MB hard disk, and a Diamond Stealth 64 DRAM graphics adapter. The pedigree of these components proved itself on our performance tests.

The system's DOSMark score was first among scores posted by the 75-MHz units, and its CD-ROM performance was impressive. But its Winstone performance was about average. The Turtle Beach Monte Carlo sound board and Micro Innovations speakers should be adequate for all but the most discerning music lovers. The system turned in average performance on our subjective sound tests.

This desktop unit is built for expansion. With three available ISA slots, two PCI slots, three 3.5-inch drive bays, and

one 5.25-inch bay, the desktop case gives you ample room to grow. Be warned, though: One of the expansion slots is a shared ISA/PCI either/or arrangement. The floppy disk drive is also mounted in the 5.25-inch drive bay—an oddity given the number of 3.5-inch bays to choose from.

With so many home-oriented software titles—including Compton's Home collection, Corel CD Power Pak, Grolier's Encyclopedia, and Time Almanac—the USA Flex PT-75 is hard to fault for not being very home-oriented. It is missing most of the on-line software packages but does include the disk and sign-up brochure for America Online and sign-up pamphlets for CompuServe and GENIE, as well as a 14.4-Kbps fax modem, installed and ready to go.

The USA Flex PT-75 creates a solid balance between performance and value but forgets the novice user in the equation. Though it's not ideal for those in need of hand-holding, this is a machine well worth holding on to for the rest of us.—AH□

► **USA Flex PT-75 MultiMedia Classic.** List price: \$2,389. USA Flex, Bloomington, IL; 800-872-3539, 708-351-9700; fax, 708-351-7204.

Circle 449 on reader service card

REPORT CARD	
USA Flex PT 75 MultiMedia Classic	
Setup	B
Software	A
Performance	C
Sound	C
Upgradability	A
Service and reliability	N/A
Overall value	B
N/A—Not applicable: USA Flex did not receive enough responses to be included in our 1995 Service & Reliability survey.	



The USA Flex PT-75 MultiMedia Classic offers a solid package but few aids for novice users.

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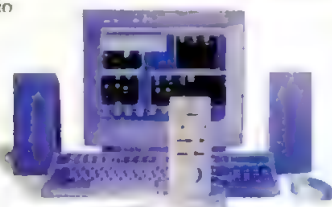
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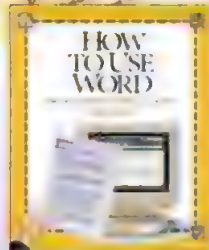
How to Use the Mouse in Windows

An important piece of this information is the instructions to the computer. You're probably familiar with the keyboard, the most common input device. A mouse, so named for its hunched-over, tail-like cord, is a hand-held input device that, along with the keyboard, is used by most people to get by without devices most people use to get by without. Although it's possible to get by without a mouse and do all your work from the keyboard, it's not too wise. The Windows interface was designed with the mouse in mind. It's not always easy to find out what they are, but like a few minutes to learn the major mouse moves, and you'll reward yourself with smoother computing.

TIP SHEET

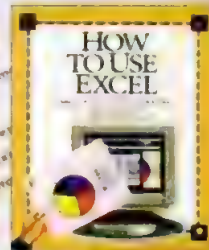
• Unless told otherwise, use the left mouse button. The other mouse buttons are used so infrequently that they are not always told about.

HOW TO USE WORD



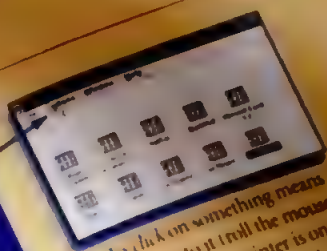
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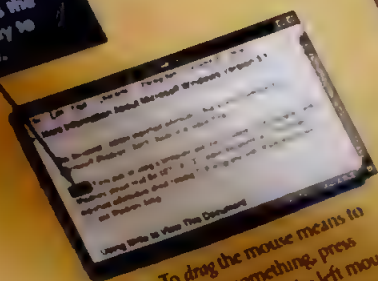
To pull
the mouse
to the screen,
click
the mouse
button twice in rapid
succession.



2

To click on something means to point to it (roll the mouse pointer is on top of it) and then press and instantly release the left mouse button. To double click on something means to point to it and then click the left mouse button twice in rapid succession.

Drag across a word to select it. Then press the Delete key to delete it.



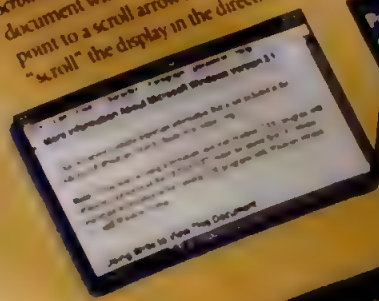
3

To drag the mouse means to point to something, press and hold down the left mouse button, roll the mouse, and then release the mouse button. For example, you can "select" a block of text for deletion by dragging from one end of the block to the other.

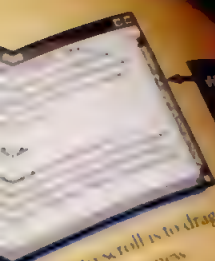


4

Scrolling is one of the most common mouse actions. When a document window cannot accommodate all its contents at once, point to a scroll arrow and hold down the left mouse button to "scroll" the display in the direction of the arrow.

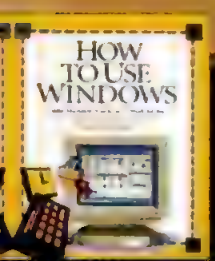


Point here and hold down the left mouse button to scroll down through the document.

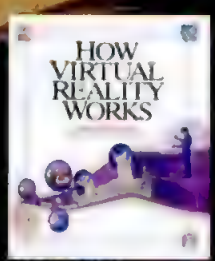


Another way to scroll is to drag the scroll bar. Dragging the scroll bar along the scroll bar position suggests what part of the contents you are viewing.

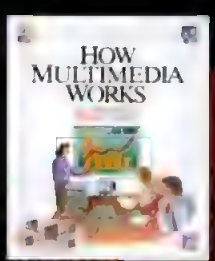
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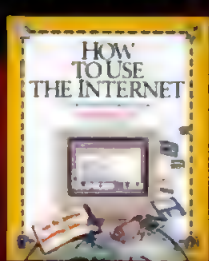
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Coming Up

Pentium and Nx586 Desktops

Mainstream PC buyers face a new spectrum of alternatives. The 100-MHz Pentium processor is finally shipping in volume, and the 120-MHz chip is on its way—even as the 75-MHz version drives prices ever lower. There's a wildcard to consider, too: NexGen's Nx586 CPU series, which promises to match the Pentium's performance but at a lower price.

How do systems based on these CPUs stack up? Will it be the 75-, 90-, 100-, or 120-MHz Pentium that gives you the most bang for the buck? Can the Nx586 really meet its performance targets? We test over 100 Pentium- and Nx586-based PCs to find out. And we take a look at technology you can expect to see more of as the year goes by: improved connectivity features, new core-logic chip sets that boost performance, Plug and Play support, and more.

Life Imitates Chart

Today's flowcharting packages let you create flowcharts, organization charts, and diagrams with ease. Our evaluation focuses on the many tools available to design charts and schematics, including templates, palettes, symbols, automation and integration features, import and export support, and output controls. In a sidebar, we discuss those flowcharting packages expressly designed to create charts based on Total Quality Management and process management guidelines.

The Hidden Network

What good is a network if you can't use it? Not very much. That's why *PC Magazine* will take a hard look at the products that define how you interact with your network—the network operating systems. We'll test the leaders—Microsoft Windows NT Server 3.5, NetWare 3.12 and 4.1, OS/2 LAN Server 4.0 (Entry and Advanced), and VINES 5.54—and tell you which products the network manager and user will find the easiest and the hardest to use in this most critical component of your LAN.

Build a Better Interface

Microsoft Windows 95 complements the familiar controls—such as push buttons, list boxes, and edit windows—with 15 new controls. One of the most useful is the tooltip control, which lets developers add Word- and Excel-style tooltips to their applications. If you're a developer, now is a great time to get acquainted with the tooltip controls, especially if you're concerned about giving your application's user interface that extra edge. Our next Power Programming column introduces this new control and presents sample code that demonstrates its use.

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NE—Network Edition.

To obtain the Network Edition of *PC Magazine*, call Circulation at 800-289-0429.

Abort, Retry, Fail?

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF PERSONAL COMPUTING

By Don Willmott

Thanks for the Clarification, Bob; We Weren't Sure

"Q: Do I call Bob 'he' when referring to the product?

"A: No. Because it is a software product, 'it' is clearly the right way to refer to Bob, its features and its benefits."

—MICROSOFT BOB PRESS RELEASE



TA
ARF on the road: Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Classified Intelligence

"Wanted to Buy: Doggie door for sliding glass door (puppy always wants out when I am right in the middle of complex data entry)." —COMPUTEREDGE

"For sale: Copier, Sharp, Commercial SF850, does 3 sides of paper, \$99." —THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES



TA
Tommy, Tommy—at least it ain't Jimmy!
(Parsons Technology Announcements 3.0 brochure.)



Richard Tennant

"Most of our product line is doing well, but the expanding touch pad on our PDA keeps opening unexpectedly."

Well, This Was Inevitable

Banana Productions (913-362-4590) is marketing a computer game called O.J.'s All-American Race To Acquittal. Play it and "you can participate in the American justice system, make a few million bucks and date fashion models. What more do you want from a computer game? Just watch your driving, or you could end up 100%, Absolutely Guilty."

Maybe Mavis Beacon should teach the typist for the Raceway Computers catalog how to do double spacing.



Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing \$19.00*

Over 1,000,000 people have learned to type faster and more accurately by using this program. Supports hires graphics and has a ten key teaching mode. The program also provides the user with graphs and statistical displays analyzing their typing. Provides input and output.

It's a Newt World

Four issues ago, this page referred to Newt Gingrich as "superconservative." A few readers told us to shut up and stick to what we know. So from now on, we'll refer to him as "laptop-loving."

If your entry is used, we'll send you \$50 and a PC Magazine T-shirt. Send your entries to Abort, Retry, Fail?, PC Magazine, One Park Ave., New York, NY 10016-5802. Winners this issue: Robert Morelli, Brent Peterson, Carol Shields, Robert Swears, and Greg Taylor.

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75MHz
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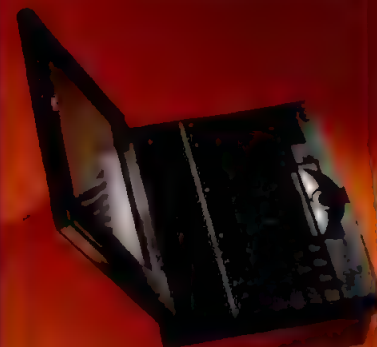
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Jan. 24, 1996
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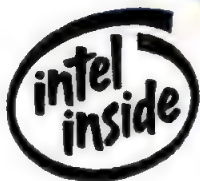
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DELL®



Dell's featured computer artist is Mick Wiggins

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- Updated Pentium Chip
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- 1GB Enhanced IDE Hard Drive (10ms)
- VS15 Monitor (15" CRT, NI)
- 64-bit PCI 2MB DRAM Video Card
- 4X Multi-session EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- MS Office 4.3, MS Bookshelf
- Visio Express for MS Office
- 256KB Writeback Cache
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- Spacesaver Keyboard
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- 4X Multi-session EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- MS Office 4.3, MS Bookshelf
- Visio Express for MS Office
- 256KB Writeback Cache
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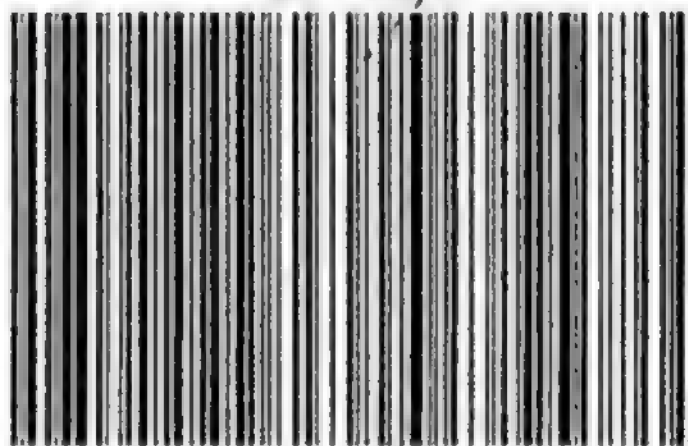
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1. Follow instructions on the other side

Back

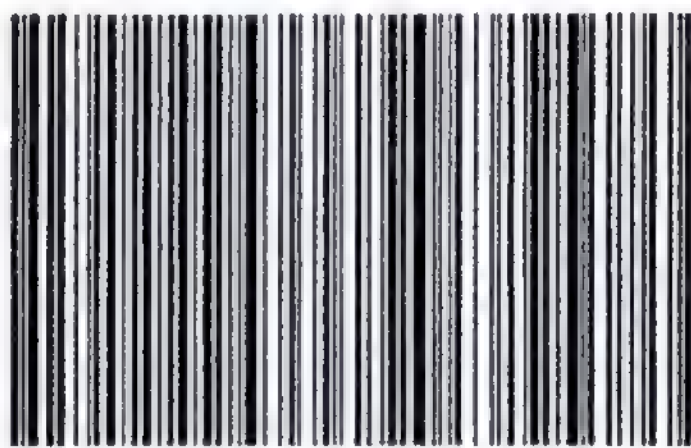
Gbs5mpBack-0018



Inverted Back

1. Follow instructions on the other side

Folded edge of the page



Inverted Foldout slip-sheet

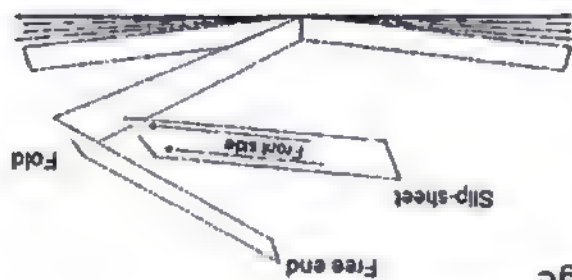
Foldout slip-sheet

1. Open the foldout page
2. Insert this sheet with

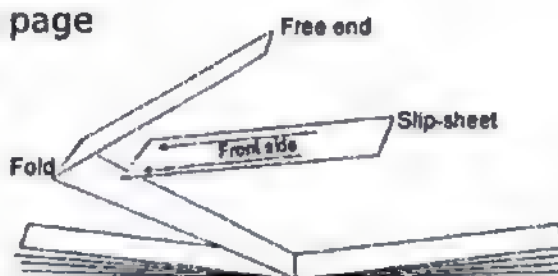
1. Front side touching the free page
2. Arrow pointing to the fold

3. Slice the folded edge

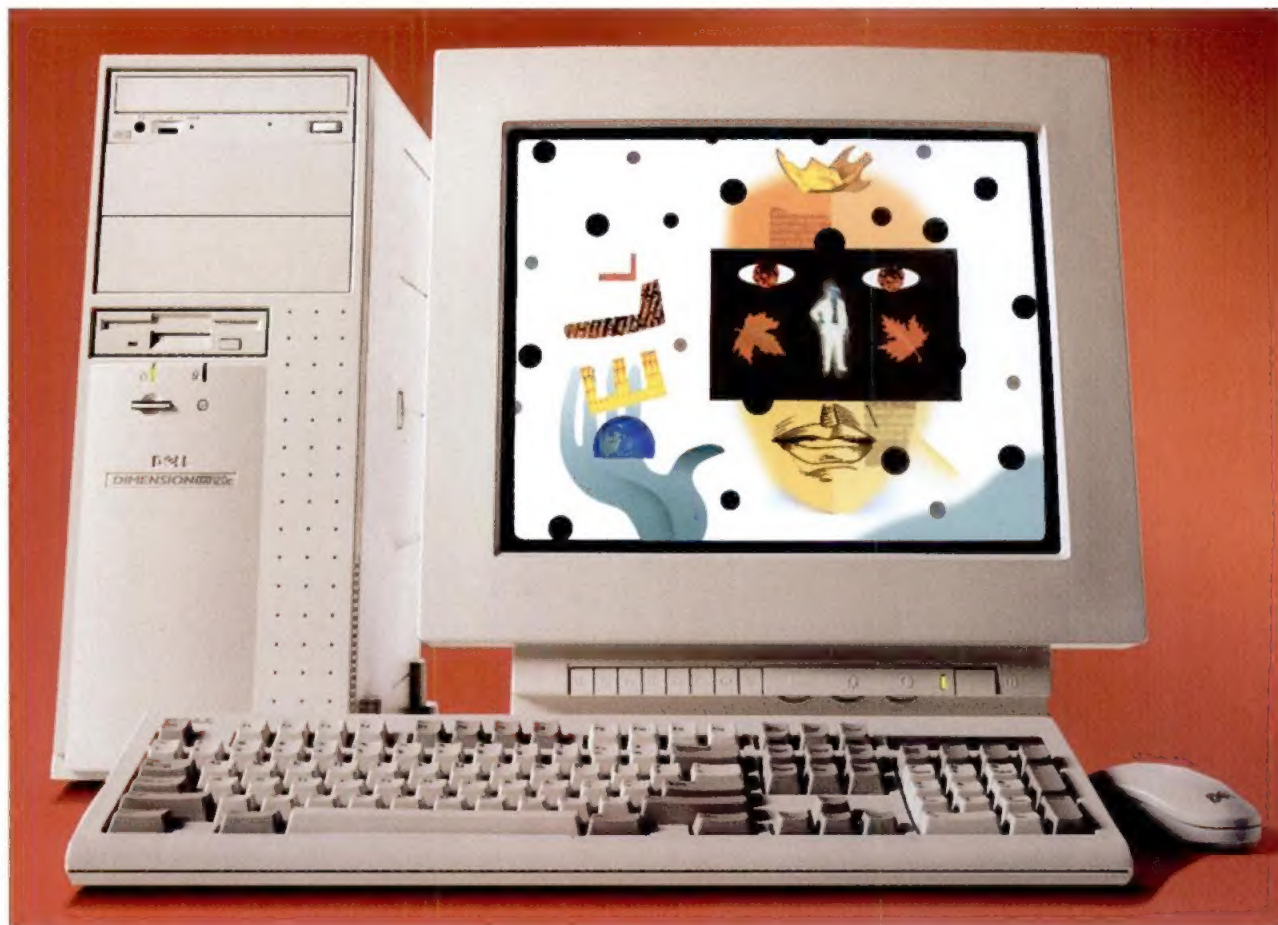
4. Close the page and slip-sheet



1. Open the foldout page
2. Insert this sheet with
 1. Front side touching the free page
 2. Arrow pointing to the fold
3. Slice the folded edge
4. Close the page and slip-sheet



WE'VE GON



Dell Dimension XPS P120c A Pentium® Processor-based 120MHz System

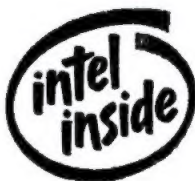
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- 4X Multi-session EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Sound Blaster 16 Sound Card
- Altec Lansing ACS-5 Speakers

- 256KB Pipeline Burst SRAM Cache (512KB Max)
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Dell's featured computer artist is Mick Wiggins.

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BEGAN WITH A HOT
CUP OF COFFEE,**



AND ENDED WITH A TOAST.



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- Sound Blaster 16 Sound Card
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